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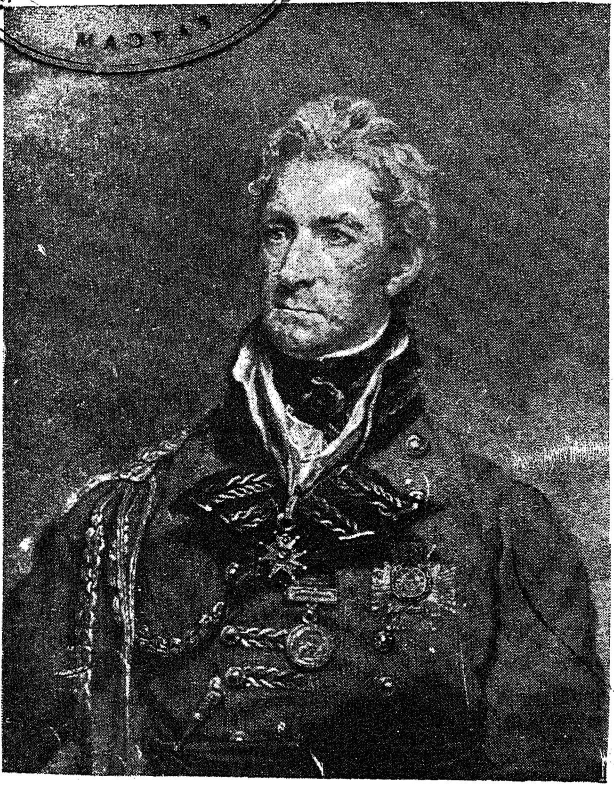

SIR THOMAS MUNRO
[From the painting by Sir Martin Archer Shee]

TOM MUNRO SAHEB

GOVERNOR OF MADRAS

A portrait, with a selection of his letters

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BY

P. R. KRISHNASWAMI

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FOREWORD

BY

His Excellency the Hon'ble Lt.-General

SIR ARCHIBALD EDWARD NYE

G.C.I.E., K.C.B., K.B.E., M.C.

Governor of Madras

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PRINTED BY G. S. PRESS, MADRAS
P.I.C. M.S. 97, 26-9-'47

To the memory of my father Mr P. Ramanujachari, who retired as Assistant Inspector of Schools in the Madras Presidency in 1918 after long years of conscientious service in the Educational Department, and died in 1940, leaving behind a noble example of industry and unselfishness, and of truth and courtesy.

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The text of Munro's Letters is taken from Gleig's Life of Sir Thomas Munro, 1849.

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FOREWORD

Government House, Madras.
18*th November,* 1946.

I have all my life read voraciously with a fairly eclectic taste, and biography has been one of my main interests. Before coming to India I naturally read everything I could lay hands on, touching on the history and conditions of life in South India. It was Mr Attlee, the Prime Minister, who advised me to read the life of Munro (he had done so before coming out here on the Simon Commission). I found myself intensely interested in the man, but I felt that his biographer had not done him justice apparently thinking that the printing of his letters and memoranda, connected together by a few laudatory sentences was quite sufficient.

If I may say so, Mr P. R. Krishnaswami has brought him to life in a very remarkably interesting way and he lives—a human being with his virtues and his failings—and with a philosophy of life which one can understand and appreciate. I found it all extremely readable and was particularly interested in Mr Krishnaswami's "Colonel Newcome" theory.

ARCHIBALD NYE

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INTRODUCTION

"What a strange pathos seems to me to accompany all our Indian story! Besides that official history which fills Gazettes, and embroiders banners with names of victory; which gives moralists and enemies cause to cry out at English rapine; and enables patriots to boast of invincible British valour—besides the splendour and conquest, the wealth and glory, the crowned ambition, the conquered danger, the vast prize, and the blood freely shed in winning it—should not one remember the tears too?" These words of the novelist Thackeray must serve to remind us of the two aspects of biography, at least, as it relates to the great names of British Indian administrators. The historical biography tells of the political achievements of the subject, but that is not all. Only a literary artist like Thackeray knows how to give the proper value to the personal story. The special point of bitterness for "the lords of the subject province" was that they had to part with the children who could thrive only in the home country. Thackeray continues, "In America it is from the breast of a poor slave that a child is taken: in India it is from the wife, and from under the palace of a splendid proconsul." The reader may be informed at once that Thackeray knew well the story of one proconsul and he certainly remembers it here. The name of the proconsul was Sir Thomas Munro, and he was Governor of Madras, and he died of cholera

in the remote district of Kurnool in the Madras Presidency. Only in the previous year, Reginald Heber, Bishop of Calcutta had stayed a few days at the Government House at Madras, and recorded in his Journal the "distress" caused to his host by the departure to England of Lady Munro and her child, necessitated by ill-health. Mentioning the hospitable consideration he received from Munro, Heber continues his comment: "All this consideration is so much the kinder in Sir Thomas Munro, because he is now much occupied with domestic distress, Lady Munro being about to return to England with one of her children who is ill "

Thackeray had certainly read his Heber carefully and with admiration. He mentions Heber in the Lecture on George IV: " . . may we not also —many of my elder hearers, I am sure, have read, and fondly remember, his delightful story—speak of a good divine, and mention Reginald Heber as one of the best of English gentlemen?" It was in March 1826 that Heber met Munro, and within less than a month, on the 3rd of April, he died at Trichinopoly and drew forth a tribute from Munro: "I never knew the death of any man produce such a universal feeling of regret. There was something so mild, so amiable, and so intelligent about him, that it was impossible not to love him." The reading about the meeting of Munro and Heber should have impressed Thackeray with the double pathos of a story of real life.

"Esmond" has been voted the best historical novel in English, and it presents a picture of the eighteenth century with such outstanding figures

as Marlborough, Swift and Addison in it. In "Vanity Fair" the years near the Battle of Waterloo are reflected. In the "Newcomes" Thackeray changes the scene to a later period, beginning with the time of his own boyhood, and they had begun to wear the golden halo of the past. "There was once a time when the sun used to shine brighter than it appears to do in this latter half of the nineteenth century; when the zest of life was certainly keener; when tavern wines seemed to be delicious, and tavern dinners the perfection of cookery. . . ."

In creating Colonel Newcome and the other characters in the novel, Thackeray could not miss his instinct, exhibited so clearly in "Esmond," to bring in prominent and leading personalities of the age. A colonel returned from India was the hero fixed upon by the novelist, and in that colonel he would, if possible, present a compendium of the great proconsuls flourishing in India at the time. There were actually three or four distinguished men, Sir Thomas Munro, Mountstuart Elphinstone, Sir Charles Metcalfe, and Sir John Malcolm. The novelist's uncle William Thackeray had served under Sir Thomas Munro. A single-volume edition of Gleig's Life of Munro appeared in 1849. Gleig was a member of the Fraserian circle to which Thackeray also belonged. The picture, "Thackeray among the Fraserians" by D. Maclise may still be seen, containing the portraits of Thackeray, Gleig and others. Thackeray had read his Gleig and was touched with the story of Munro. He had been himself in India and as a little boy was shipped

away to England when six years old, with the loving mother remaining behind in India, to whom he wrote little letters afterwards. The little boy was taken to see Napoleon Buonaparte at St. Helena on the voyage home, and this left a lasting impression on Thackeray who alluded to it in his lecture on George III. Napoleon and St. Helena have, curiously enough, occurred more than once in Gleig's Life of Munro also: "General and Mrs. Munro sailed for England in January 1819. The homeward voyage was, upon the whole, a pleasant one, for the ship touched both at Ceylon and at St. Helena; and some delay taking place at the latter island, General Munro was enabled to gratify a wish which he had long entertained. He traversed the rock from end to end, visiting every spot to which the presence of Napoleon had given an interest; and left it more than ever impressed with mingled admiration and pity for the great, misguided, and ill-fated man." In a letter to his wife dated September 1826 Munro writes: "Nothing has given me so much pleasure as your letter and journal from St. Helena . . I never doubted that you would feel for Buonaparte in his wonderful reversal of fortune. I should have been surprised if you had not; for no person, I think of proper feeling, can approach the black solitary rock of St. Helena without being moved at his fate."

Thackeray cherished a marked admiration for Cervantes and he was re-reading "Don Quixote" when writing the early chapters of the "Newcomes." Sir Thomas Munro was also attracted to a love of the classic of Cervantes and he learnt

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PART I

TOM MUNRO SAHEB

A Puzzling Eccentric

Perhaps the greatest of British Indian administrators in some ways, Sir Thomas Munro left behind him a name round which legends have grown in different parts of the Madras province. The most imposing monument in the capital city of Madras, the equestrian statue by Chantrey in the Island, happens to be the one in his memory. He left a permanent mark on several aspects of the government of this presidency, besides benefiting British Indian administration in general with valuable ideas born of the richness of his experience and the originality of his active mind. Yet, as a man, Munro is a forgotten hero. As a man of action, a pioneer who quickly acquired a firm grasp over each newly conquered territory of the British power and managed to place in a short time the administration there on sound lines, whose work was performed in endless camps and in unfamiliar regions, Munro could not have the good luck of a literary celebrity like Johnson or Scott or Macaulay, to find a talented biographer who can leave to posterity a convincing portrait of his personality. Yet he was not wholly unlucky. Only four years after his death, the Rev. G. R. Gleig prepared his Life from the copious papers and letters placed at his disposal. The letters of Munro are reflective in the most vivid manner

of the profound qualities which made him great, so that even more than a century after his death, we are not now seriously handicapped in making an effort to recapture the true features of his personality. The absence of a convincing record of Munro's personality, so far, is not due wholly to the disadvantage of men of action not finding usually the adequate biographer. Munro was a perplexing personality. During his life he must have been the greatest enigma to all who saw him:

I

In the first place, Munro's physical appearance was unfavourable to his winning popularity. Gleig writes: "He was a tall, robust, and somewhat awkward looking lad; indifferent, rather than otherwise, to the niceties of costume and manner." Towards the end of the book Gleig informs us again that Munro's appearance "was more striking perhaps, than handsome." His countenance produced the impression of sternness, his friend Elphinstone also referring to this on one occasion.

We are however to look at Munro's visage in his mind. In Gleig's words: "But his disposition was manly, his heart good, and his forbearance and powers of self-denial remarkable." The biographer quotes further from a surviving classfellow an account of Munro's qualities while at school: " . . by far the most skilful boxer at school, he beat every boy with whom he fought, even those who were several years older than himself: . . his superiority in fighting became known only in

consequence of his resisting the unprovoked attacks of quarrelsome boys of superior age and strength, and beating them by his coolness, his courage, and his unqualified endurance. He was the protector of the weak against the strong, and, at the same time he was so unassuming and inoffensive, that he had no enemies." The picture of Munro provided so far has enough details to kindle the imagination of a great writer. A strong but awkward looking son of a merchant, who has the soul of honour, and who is the natural champion of the weak against the strong at school, has actually made the Dobbin of "Vanity Fair." The incidents of Dobbin, Cuff and Osborne bear out exactly the description in Gleig.

II

Next to his awkward and forbidding appearance should be mentioned Munro's deafness. To quote Gleig; "He suffered when very young from an attack of measles, which left a legacy of partial deafness, from which he never afterwards recovered." After his arrival in Madras, writing to his father, Munro mentions Haliburton's advice to him to keep at the right of his General; "for he will be surprised if he asks you a question, and you don't make any answer." In his letter of the 23rd October 1805, addressed to his mother he alludes to his deafness as more annoying than any ailment acquired in India: "A much more serious complaint is the deafness which I brought from home, and which is older than my remembrance. The temporary fits

which I used to have at home of extemporary deafness are much less frequent in this country; but I am more impatient under them, because a society of grown up gentlemen are not so easily prevailed upon as my schoolfellows were, to raise their voices for my convenience." It was during his holiday at home, years after his going out to India, that Munro became bitterly sensitive to the awkwardness of his deafness. In a letter to his sister he writes: "I have been little more than a dumb spectator of all the gaiety which you talk of, for I can hardly hear a word that is said. I never was so impatient under deafness as at present, when I meet every moment in my native city an old acquaintance, asking fifty questions, which they are obliged to repeat four or five times before they can make me comprehend them. Some of them stare at me, and think, no doubt, that I am come home because I am deranged."

III

The deafness naturally made Munro reserved in conversation: "His manners were reserved and he spoke but little in society, . . . with two or three friends to whom he felt that he could unbosom himself, he was one of the most agreeable of men." After visiting Munro at Madras in February 1826, Bishop Heber records about his good qualities, concluding with the words: "and his popularity is, perhaps, the more honourable to him, because his manners, though unaffected and simple, are reserved and grave, at least on a first acquaintance." Added to natural awkwardness was the setting at nought

of current fashions in dress. In a letter to his sister written soon after his arrival in Madras Munro states: "My dress has not been more splendid than my furniture. I have never been able to keep it all of a piece; it grows tattered in one quarter, while I am establishing funds to repair it in another; and my coat is in danger of losing its sleeves, while I am pulling it off to try on a new waistcoat." Writing of the time that Munro spent in Canara, Gleig remarks: "Not at any period of his life does Sir Thomas Munro appear to have been over-fastidious in the matter of dress; but during his sojourn in Canara, contempt of foppishness degenerated into something not far removed from eccentricity. His garments, in regard to shape, set all changes of fashion at defiance; and having been first brought into use while Sir Eyre Coote commanded in the Carnatic, they became in the end not only shabby but threadbare. His cue (for cues were worn in those days) was tied up just as often with a piece of red tape as with a black ribbon." Colonel Newcome shares with Munro this indifference to fashionable clothes. Binnie chaffs him over his perseverance in wearing a coat which had been bought years previously, when Newcome lived at Barrackpore. When the Colonel is dreaming, however, of future plans on behalf of his son, he is induced to take definite steps, so that he may not be at a disadvantage to attract the fashionable Ethel to become his son's wife. He asks his servant Kean to get him a new coat. 'I have been so long out of Europe that I don't know the customs here, and am not above learning.' Munro's indifference

to fashionable clothes did not remain passive but expressed itself sometimes in the ridiculing of those who affected the new styles. In a letter to his sister he writes: "The few solitary English ladies that I meet with only serve to strengthen my prejudice. I met with one the other day all bedizened and huddled into a new habit, different from anything that I had ever seen before. On asking her what name it went by, she was surprised that I did not know the *à la Grecque*. It looked for all the world like a large petticoat thrown over her shoulders, and brought together close under her arms." It must have been the more exasperating to European vanity that Munro based his ridicule of fashions on the standard established by the practice of Brahmin women in India. He states in the same letter: "I have myself so vulgar a taste, that I see more beauty in a plain dress than in one tricked out with the most elegant pattern that ever fashionable painter feigned. This unhappy depravity of taste has been occasioned, perhaps, by my having been long accustomed to view the Brahman women, who are in this country both the first in rank, and in personal charms, almost always arrayed in nothing but single pieces of dark blue cotton cloth, which they throw on with a decent art and a careless grace which in Europe, I am afraid is only to be found in the drapery of antiques."

Munro's admiration for the Brahmin women was much deeper than for the graceful style of their clothes. In his evidence before the House of Commons, dated the 15th April 1812 he states: "In a former part of my evidence in speaking of the

Hindu women, I mentioned the custom of their bathing in public at European stations: this statement may perhaps leave an unfavourable impression of their demeanour, but there is no man who has been in India but must maintain that nothing can be more modest than their behaviour and that they confide in it on all occasions for their protection from insult, and are seldom deceived. It would be no slight praise to the women of any nation, not even to the ladies of England, to have it said that the correctness of their conduct was not inferior to that of the Brahman women and Hindu women of the higher classes.'

Thackeray has not failed to reflect in his own cynical way Munro's good opinion of the Brahmin woman in the portrait of Colonel Newcome. The wicked Barnes Newcome is allowed to indulge in cheap witticism at his uncle's expense: 'If he had died in India, would my late aunt have had to perish in a funeral pile?' At the Club he enquires offensively of Sir Thomas de Boots, 'Have I any Brahminical cousins?' It will be relevant to mention here that Sir Sidney Low who visited India in the early years of this century has also remarked on the decorum with which women in this country can bathe in public, not exhibiting more than a strip of the shoulder at any time.

IV

Munro's rudeness was not confined to the ridiculing of the fashions in clothes. "His conversation, likewise, though always entertaining, and often

instructive, assumed by degrees a rougher tone than was natural to it." He seems to have shown little consideration for the faults and absurdities of others, in conversation or in writing. A very early letter of his from Madras carries stinging satire to his younger brother William over whose death he sends his condolence to his father a little later: "... your extensive learning puts me in mind of a Doctor—I have forgot his name, no matter, you will remember it, when I tell you it begins with an M——, and that he was a great theologist, and made speeches at the Council of Trent, and was less attended to than several who spoke less of themselves, and more of the public business." Banter is continued in the following paragraph which looks cruel because it is effective: "You demand an account of the East Indies, the Mogul's dominions, and Muxadabad; but I shall be cautious how I submit it to your inspection till it is properly digested, especially as I am advised by you of a circumstance of which I was before ignorant, that Muxadabad is more populous than London. I imagine, when you made the above requisition, that you did it with a view rather to try my knowledge than to increase your own; for your great skill in geography would point out to you that Muxadabad is as far from Madras, as Constantinople is from Glasgow; you will, therefore, I hope, favour me with a description of the Turk and his capital."

Even in the letters to his parents he betrays no modest delicacy in the comments he makes to them. Hindu sentiment will brand it as a piece of impudence that a son should write, to console his mother

over a loss of fortune, suggesting that none of her children had so far been taken from her. This is what Munro did in a letter to his mother dated 10th November 1785. In the Hindu view the impudence lies in the calamitous possibility turning out a fact, and Munro's impudence proved this. To quote Gleig: "Soon after the above was despatched he heard of the death of one of his brothers, and wrote by the next opportunity to condole with his father on the event."

Munro's father had once committed the indiscretion of trying to enlist the sympathy of an M.P. to obtain promotion for his son by showing him his letters. The son's rebuke is conveyed as follows: "I see that you catch at everything from which you think that there is any chance of my drawing the smallest benefit hereafter . . ." To another indiscretion of his relations, of publishing one of his letters in a London paper, his reaction was to destroy a "treatise" he had written for their perusal. "There was no use in keeping it, when I could not venture to send it to those for whose amusement it was intended."

As we are considering the subject of his roughness in manners we may note that a letter of Munro's suggests that he had been informed by a member of the Board of Revenue of his want of respect, in the language of his letters: "I am very much obliged to you for your friendly hint about official respect . . . . I have always written in the same style both to the Governor and to the Board of Revenue, without ever suspecting that my disrespect had attracted their attention. I must

confess however that the words at the close of a letter, 'I have the honour, etc.' were omitted by design; but I omitted them for the same reason that I once used them—that I thought it was the fashion. . . . Be this as it may, I find that I have been wrong; and I shall trust to your kindness to point out, hereafter, any expression in my letters that may be deemed exceptionable."

It is not unlikely that Munro, who was ever confident of doing his duty thoroughly, showed little respect for forms of official courtesy. Those above him appreciating his worth let him have his way apparently. The following, though written by way of friendly chaff, carries its own meaning. It is in a letter from the Chief Secretary to Government to inform him of his appointment as Superintendent of the Ceded Districts: "These gentlemen will be put on a better footing than the assistants in the Baramahl, under Read; but your allowances must be curtailed, in consequence of your pertinacious resistance to the authority of a regular government, and in conformity to that noble contempt of wealth in which you affect to imitate the old snarler in the tub." Munro's denunciation of official Red Tape is expressed in his letter of 1st September 1815 to Mr Cumming on the delay caused over judicial reform.

A Feud with Hymen

Munro's eccentricity or roughness of manner should have been marked in nothing so strongly as in his attitude to matrimony and behaviour towards women. Human nature may be supposed to

have its compensations, and it may be argued that persons in whom the sex urge is strong are not usually those who achieve most for humanity, and conversely, those who are not easily susceptible to the tender passion are left free to accumulate an almost incredible degree of useful service to the race. It was the total inhibition of sex, a writer pointed out, that helped Joan of Arc to become France's most purposeful patriot. So it may be said that Munro achieved extraordinary success in public administration, because he resisted for long years the charms of woman. Gleig informs us that Munro "ridiculed the idea that any other than an idle man could fall seriously in love, and deprecated matrimony as a hindrance to the right discharge of the duties of a public servant." Munro could have said in the manner of Othello:

> no, when light-wing'd toys
> Of feather'd Cupid seel with wanton dullness
> My speculative and offic'd instruments,
> That my disports corrupt and taint my business,
> Let housewives make a skillet of my helm,
> And all the indign and base adversities
> Make head against my estimation!

His prolonged and firm opposition to the idea of marriage may induce us to think him a misogynist which he was not in fact. What is remarkable is the completely detached manner in which Munro discusses and rejects the idea of marriage. In a letter dated 23rd January 1793, he writes: "I have no relish, I suspect, for what is called domestic felicity. I could not endure to go about gossiping and paying formal visits with my wife, and then

coming home and consulting about a change in our furniture, or physicking some of the squalling children that Providence might bless us with." His sister having suggested a bride for him, Munro sets forth the obstacles to marrying her, in a mirthful manner. First, no assurance has been given that the lady loves him and further, that she will accept him when he returns home from India. Munro knew his own limitations:

> Haply, for I am black,
> And have not those soft parts of conversation
> That chamberers have; for I am declin'd
> Into the vale of years,—yet that's not much,—

If he should go home in expectation and get disappointed it will prove a tragedy to him. On his own side he may reject the lady for not satisfying his ideal of a wife: "nothing but such a peerless dame as Rosalind, or Angelica, or Clarinda, will make me kneel." Even if he marries, he cannot feel assured of a happy married life, for, if the bride, "instead of taking up a lute, and pouring upon my ear a strain like the sweet south, should fall to scolding the servants, the spell would vanish." He would want to make a number of stipulations before he actually married, the last of them being "when I am tired of home, I may return to India *alone*."

The first hopeful view of matrimony is contained in a letter of the 17th March 1803 to a friend on the occasion of his marriage. He and the friend have long sworn together against marriage. So Munro regards him now as among the "stricken deer." His friend's surrender disappoints him

keenly, for he writes: "I really believe that your arguments against it have contributed greatly to keep me single, by always putting me on my guard, whenever I spied the enemy blushing in a female form." He feels he himself must wait still longer to marry, though he knows that he will become then so old as to need only the comforts of a nurse instead of the charms of a wife.

We may easily imagine what a reputation for queerness Munro should have built up for himself when one invading damsel after another arriving from Europe failed to make a breach in the fort of his heart, and he was also brazen enough to declare that when the felicities of marriage failed him he would confidently turn to India. Thackeray's description of Colonel Newcome suits Munro exactly. "The widows or virgins who endeavoured to fill Emma's place found the door of Newcome's heart fast and barred, and assailed it in vain." Sir Thomas de Boots tells Barnes of him: "He's an odd man; they call him Don Quixote in India; . ." The name is appropriate to Munro for a second reason. The classic of Cervantes was his favourite reading from boyhood, and his writing alludes frequently to the characters and episodes in that book.

Two years later than the date of the letter quoted above, Munro had so far changed his attitude as to concede that his mother and other relations at home were really competent to choose his bride, as he himself had been so long away from the home country. Nine years still later, in March 1814, Munro married Miss Jane Campbell of Craigie, in

Ayrshire. Except for telling us that his young bride proved to be the realization of all that fancy had sketched for Munro, Gleig is disappointing in not letting us know fuller details. When Munro surrendered to marriage there was no half way house. He became a devoted and ardent husband. Lady Munro's picture painted by Sir John Lawrence, hung up for many years in the drawing room of the Government House at Madras is now at the Guindy Government House. Bishop Heber gives us a short sketch: "Lady Munro is a very lovely woman and of remarkably pleasing manners; everybody seems to regret most honestly her going away, saying that her whole conduct has been made of good manners, good heart, and sound, solid judgment."

Frank and Bitter

Another important cricumstance calculated to make Munro unpopular with his compatriots in India was the nature of his views in politics. He expressed himself candidly on the worthlessness of great names: "The public look impatiently for the arrival of ——, and seem to be sanguine in their expectations of the happy effects to be derived from the ability and exertions of so distinguished a character. Experience might have taught them, at least in this country, to build less on great names; for they have been so many impositions on the understanding of mankind, invested with high offices, and recommended by common fame, as were enough to prejudice them against any man who should come among them with such credentials." He states his view of noble birth in another letter:

"I am so far from wishing to abolish hereditary distinctions, that I think them useful when kept within proper bounds. I speak of them in a moral rather than a political view. Nobility of birth, if it does not always give elevation of sentiment, often prevents a man from descending to actions which he would have hardly started at had he been born in an inferior sphere; the fear of disgracing his family keeps him above them; but this is only a negative kind of merit. When, however, nobility is joined to an excellent natural disposition, cultivated by education, it gives the possessor a dignity of thinking and acting rarely found in the middling ranks of life; of these there are many instances among the Spaniards."

Munro set up severe standards for British officials. According to him it was essential for a Collector to possess a knowledge of the language of the people whom he administered. "No man should get the charge of a district who does not understand the language of natives; for unless he has perseverance enough for this he will never have enough for a collector." When Read and Munro were appointed to Baramahl in 1792, intense jealousy filled the revenue officials. To quote Gleig: "Towards Mr. Munro, indeed, it continued to operate with marked bitterness throughout the remainder of his public life, and its violence appeared to obtain fresh strength according to the progress which he made from one post of honour to another." He urged on the civilians to cherish a favourable view of the people over whom they were set to govern: "We can never be qualified to govern men against whom

we are prejudiced. If we entertain a prejudice at all, it ought rather to be in their favour than against them." He was not tired of stating that the people would improve in their character only when they were admitted to positions of trust and responsibility in the public service. "With what grace can we talk of our paternal government, if we exclude them from every important office, and say, as we did till very lately, that in a country containing fifteen millions of inhabitants, no man but a European shall be intrusted with so much authority as to order the punishment of a single stroke of a rattan? Such an interdiction is to pass a sentence of degradation on a whole people, for which no benefit can ever compensate. There is no instance in the world of so humiliating a sentence having ever been passed upon any nation." He knew very well that a foreign domination would have a terribly demoralising effect on any people in the world. "Let Britain be subjugated by a foreign power to-morrow; let the people be excluded from all share in the government, from public honours, from every office of high trust or emolument, and let them in every situation be considered as unworthy of trust, and all their knowledge and all their literature, sacred and profane, would not save them from becoming, in another generation or two, a low-minded, deceitful, and dishonest race." Munro was ever pleading for an increasing employment of Indians in the public service. He believed also in increasing the number of sepoys rather than of European soldiers in the army. "We have added to the numbers of our army, but not to its strength by bringing

so many regiments from Europe; for so great a number of Europeans serve only to retard the operations of an Indian army, less by their inability to endure the fatigues of the field, than by the great quantity of cattle which is required to convey their provisions and equipage." Munro applied early to have himself removed to a sepoy corps, and joined the Eleventh Battalion of native infantry in which he continued till January 1787. His listeners knew too well the sneer implied in his words when Barnes Newcome in Thackeray's novel announced, as he read the newspaper: "My uncle the colonel of sepoys, and his amiable son have been paying a visit to Newcome

Munro did not mince matters when referring to the corruption of European officers in India. Europeans were apt to assume that only "natives" were corrupt, but Munro did not permit such delusions to thrive. Europeans were apt to be even more corrupt. When they were, they were dealt with leniently, while the natives were visited with unsparing severity. The natives could always be replaced by better men, but the Europeans had to be kept on anyhow. It was sometimes stated that even the great expense of maintaining European officials was compensated by higher standards of honesty. But this was not true. "We have had instances of corruption among Europeans, notwithstanding their liberal allowances." An increase in the number of Europeans with a reduction in allowances could only lead to greater corruption. In the interests of the reputation of the government it was better the lower native officials were corrupt, rather than the

higher, for in all countries, corruption was inevitable in the lower ranks.

In a letter of November 1818, Munro argues against the larger employment of Europeans in the judiciary, because they are more costly and less efficient. To the objection that natives are corrupt Munro opposes his usual common sense: "Nobody ever supposed that the subordinate officers of the Excise and Customs in England are remarkable for their purity. But we need not go home for examples. The Company's servants were notoriously known to make their fortunes in partnership with their native agents, until Lord Cornwallis thought it advisable to purchase their intergrity by raising their allowances. Let this be done with regard to the natives, and the effect will be similar, though not perhaps in a similar degree; for we can not expect to find in a nation fallen under a foreign domination the same pride and high principle as among a free people; but I am persuaded that we shall meet with a greater share of integrity and talent than we are aware of."

In his letter of the 31st January 1795, Munro acquaints us with collectors who used to misappropriate the revenue for their personal benefit: "We see every day collectors, who always lived above their salary, amassing great fortunes in a very few years." If the country was to prosper, the collector should set the example of honesty: "The collector cannot expect that the country is to flourish when he himself has given the signal to plunder it."

Munro was referring perhaps to the most notorious instance of corruption at the time when he

wrote about the post of Private Secretary to the Governor: "I imagine that, in early and better days, the private secretary's principal business was to lay every rich native under contribution for the benefit of his master; but as this class of natives has now become extinct at this place, my secretary will, I fear, have but little to do . . ."

Munro could always administer a snub to officers who spoke contemptuously of the poor farmers of this country. Under date 15th November 1822 he writes: "Everything in this report is commendable excepting those passages in which he speaks of the character of the natives, and of his having distributed books among them. He evinces strong prejudice against them, and deplores the ignorance of the rayets, and their uncouth speech, which he observes must prevent for ever direct communication between them and the European authorities. He speaks as if these defects were peculiar to India, and as if all the farmers and labourers of England were well educated and spoke a pure dialect."

Sir Alexander Arbuthnot in his prefatory memoir to his "Selections from his Minutes and other official writings" of Sir Thomas Munro makes a comparison with his three great contemporaries, Elphinstone, Malcolm, and Metcalfe, and observes: "In general society Munro was probably the least popular man of the four."

As They Saw Him

As we have acquainted ourselves with numerous details of his personal characteristics we may now

try to piece together an imaginary picture of Munro as he should have appeared to his contemporaries. An awkward-looking deaf man, with furrows on his face which imparted sternness to it, dressed in absurd clothes of which he did not feel ashamed, he neither smiled nor spoke most of the time he appeared in company. Some said he had no voice, and so did not speak. Others averred he was known to have talked to ryots from morning till night, in his tours. Numberless jokes were uttered which never caught his attention. Once a civilian spoke funnily about the temples where the natives worshipped, and all the men and women burst into laughter. Munro was marked to have looked severely and reprovingly on all. Those who saw him first and did not know of his deafness thought him idiotic. The women thought him proud for he rarely condescended to look at them, and much less to admire them. It was in vain for a woman to try to attract him by putting on fashionable clothes, for he looked at them only with contemptuous amusement, and he shocked a group of the most fashionable ladies at Fort St. George by asking them in the characteristic low whisper of a deaf man: "Have you ever tried the blue cotton-sarees which the Brahman women of Ceded Districts wear?" one night after dinner the assembled company discussed the romantic quality of feminine names ending in -a, like Celia, Delia, etc. All the men were asked to hand in each his favourite name on a slip of paper. One of the slips contained the name "Ind-ia," and everybody looked accusingly at Munro who remained unperturbed all the time. The

society in the drawing room at the Madras Government House referred in whispers sometimes to Munro having worked his passage before the mast, when he first sailed to India. Some remarked on his large rough hands and remembered his handling the ropes on board the "Walpole." A wag referred one day to Sir Thomas Rumbold:

"Your Excellency must have heard of the waiter at St James Coffee House who rose to be Governor here,---"

"Of course, I know all about Rumbold, he sailed home about the time I came out here, and do you know, I was one of the crew on the ship I sailed by?" replied Sir Thomas, ending in a loud laugh.

A Chronicle

It must be useful here to offer a brief account of the principal events in Munro's life. The second son of a Glasgow merchant with a large family of five sons and two daughters, Thomas Munro was born on the 27th May 1761. From the High School in which the classics were mainly taught, Munro passed to the College when he was only thirteen years old. Mathematics and Chemistry were his special subjects of study, though he read eagerly history, literature and economics also. He was distinguished in athletic sports including boxing. He spent his vacations at a house called Northwoodside in a picturesque situation on the banks of the Kelvin, where he entertained himself with fishing or swimming. Among the books of his general reading were accounts of voyages, biographies, and

later, poetry and drama. Shakespeare, "Don Quixote," and Adam Smith's "Wealth of Nations" attracted him specially. Entered as a clerk in a counting-house Munro found his occupation uncongenial. He was also obliged by the wish of his parents to refuse a lieutenant's commission at this time. Owing to the outbreak of the American war his father's affairs became complicated, he was also reduced to bankruptcy. The father now accepted for Thomas a midshipman's place in the mercantile marine of the East India Company. Munro started to join the ship "Walpole" on the 20th February 1779. Meanwhile however the father procured for him a cadet's warrant, but Thomas continued to perform his duties as midshipman voluntarily for some time.

Munro arrived at Madras on the 15th January 1780. He was glad to get out of the ship because he would get rid of his shipmates, the soldiers. Munro never liked the voyages between England and India. He writes on the 5th June 1814: "The want of room is not what I dislike most in a sea voyage; the long confinement to the same set of people, and the unvaried prospect of sky and water for several months, are much more unpleasant." To a tall man that Munro was, the low height of the cabins was a serious inconvenience: "Mine is large enough, but it is very low, not above five feet high, so that I cannot stand upright in it; and I must, after sitting some time, be cautious in rising or I should knock my head against the beams. I know from the experience of many a hard blow, that it

will be some weeks before I learn that the roof of the cabin is lower than my head."

The cadet's pay was five pagodas and free lodging. Of the five only one was left for food and clothes after paying the servants. It was in an exciting period of South Indian history that Munro arrived in Madras. Haidar Ali's power was at its height. The Government at Fort St. George was not held in great esteem. A letter from George Gray who was sent to Haidar to intercede on behalf of some English prisoners, to Fort St. George, dated 1st April 1780, is worth reproducing here (quoted in Love's Vestiges) : "The Nabob Hyder Ally Cawn had of his own accord liberated the Gentlemen whose enlargement I was directed to solicit, so that it only remained for me to return him thanks for the friendly manner in which he had dismissed them and provided for their journey through his country. When I had done this, I took occasion at the same time to express to the Nabob the sentiments of regard and friendship which the Government of Fort St. George and the English nation in general entertain'd towards his highness; but I am sorry to say my professions on the subject did not meet with the reception which I hoped, for they were answered with reproaches of repeated breaches of faith, and the English nation was taxed with a positive breach of Treaty Notwithstanding this unpleasant manifestation of the Nabob's sentiments, I continued at Seringapatam in hopes of finding some favourable opportunity of an explanation, but I was completely disappointed, for he never permitted me to visit him again till

In April 1792 he marched with the force ordered to occupy the Baramahl ceded by Tipu to the British. From April 1792 to March 1799 Munro was employed under Read in the civil administration of that region. His headquarters was Dharmapuri. He was apt to regard these seven years as among the happiest in his life. They meant however hard work. "I write from daybreak till sunset every day; and at night I am either engaged with idle people, or so much exhausted as not to be able to think correctly on any subject." Munro was also of the feeling that there should have been no peace with Tipu.

He longed keenly at this time for company and amusement. His passion for physical exercise was also revived now. "I longed for company, not necessarily for the sake of conversation but also to amuse myself with being idle. For I would rather play fives or billiards, or make a party to go up a hill or to swim, than read the finest composition of human genius, or pass a classical night with the whole of the Royal Society in full College."

Revenue settlement was Munro's important task. While moving from village to village he admired the picturesque scenery of the country. When it rained heavily Munro's tent used to get flooded. The Cauvery dominated the scene in many places, Munro desisted from plunging in the river at one place because alligators were reported to be there. He describes the beauty of a spot twelve miles north of Sankaridurg in the month of June.

All the time he was in Baramahl Munro was looking eagerly to a fresh outbreak with Tipu. It

was good news to him that Tipu was allying himself with the French Republic: "I wished anxiously that we should have seized the present opportunity of reducing him, before we could be prevented by the return of peace with France." The time for action came soon enough. Two formidable armies, one from Madras, and another from Bombay, were marched upon Seringapatam. Munro was attached to an independent corps under Colonel Read which was in charge of supplies to the main part of the army from Madras. He could not therefore be present at the siege and fall of Seringapatam which he reached six days later, on the 10th May. The way in which the conquered territory was disposed of did not please Munro who did not want a Raja of Mysore "to be dragged forth from oblivion." But he was appointed Secretary to the Commission for the settlement of Mysore. Malcolm was his colleague at this time, and it was also now that he came into personal contact with Colonel Wellesley, afterwards the Duke of Wellington. He remained in this post till after the installation of the Raja in July 1799.

The next move of Munro was to Canara, part of the newly-acquired territory of Tipu. He became the collector of Canara. The district was wild, inhospitable and unproductive, according to Munro. His stay in this region was the only period of his service which he did not like and about which he constantly complained. For one thing the long rains of Canara filled Munro with disgust: "I would not stay three years in such a country of eternal rains, where a man

is boiled one half the year and roasted the other, were it given to me in Jagheer." Munro found the administrative machinery in chaos. Other circumstances also combined to render Canara particularly disagreeable to Munro. Coondapur became his headquarters now, and a nephew of Colonel Read, one of his assistants. He now availed himself of his acquaintance with Colonel Wellesley to represent to him the inadequate requital of his pioneer services in the revenue collection of Baramahl, and that he should be allowed to go back to his old division in Baramahl as soon as he set Canara in order. Or, if war should break out, as it should, with the Mahrattas, he would gladly follow Wellesley in charge of the commissariat. He wrote about his grievances to Malcolm also at this time. Colonel Wellesley was frequently exchanging letters with Munro at this time, discussing his Mahratta campaign, and describing the subduing of the chieftain of Dhoondee, and he asked Munro to be ready to follow the brinjaris (provision-dealers attached to an army).

From July 1799 to September 1800 Munro laboured in Canara, kept away from all English society. Relief came in 1800 when he was appointed Superintendent of the Ceded Districts with four assistants among whom were Cochrane, Thackeray (uncle of the novelist), and Stodart. Anantapur was now his headquarters from which many of his letters are dated. As usual his work was hard. He writes in 1801: "I have led such a life these two last years, that I have been obliged to give up all private writing." He is hopeful of the new districts yielding

"a very noble revenue, drawn with ease from willing subjects." The only problem in the Ceded Districts was the poligars who had to be put down completely. The revenue work could progress only much more slowly than in Baramahl. The contrast of the Ceded Districts with other regions was marked: "You will find no spot in Scotland so naked as the Ceded Districts where there is hardly a tree to be seen from Penukonda to Adoni." There was once trouble in Thackeray's division because the potails who had given false information previously, so as to pocket part of the revenues themselves, were now exposed by three informers, one of whom was of the cutchery. These were murdered in the cutchery itself by the potails, and Thackeray just saved himself from being victimised in the violence of the disorder. This gave rise to the consideration whether military aid should be availed of in revenue administration. Munro believed characteristically that a collector should meet the people without military aid or escort.

Colonel Wellesley again consulted Munro at this time about his Mahratta campaign and adopted his suggestions in settling the newly acquired territory. In a letter of November 1803 Colonel Wellesley invited Munro's criticism of the Battle of Assaye, and it was given candidly.

Munro was now thinking of going home. The Vellore Mutiny broke out at this time and was speedily put down by Gillespie. Lord Bentinck referred the matter personally to Munro, and Munro expressed his opinion on it.

Munro had become a Lieutenant Colonel before 1806. In August 1807 he was preparing to leave India. Yet he regretted he had only a moderate competency then, "while by remaining four or five years longer I should double my fortune." We should remember in this connection that officials in those days never went home on leave but by resigning their posts. It was however open for them to be reappointed to their posts on return.

Munro remained in Europe from April 1808 to June 1814. The question of the status of the East India Company came up afresh before Parliament at this time, in 1813, and Munro was among the experts whose evidence was sought on the occasion, and was ultimately valued most. A Commission was also appointed at the time to inquire into the judicial administration of this country, of which Munro was made the head. Munro had married just a few months before he left England.

With the outbreak of the last Mahratta war Munro longed for a military command but he was disappointed. The work of the Commission, which was appointed for three years, was hardly over before Munro was asked to undertake the settlement of the southern Mahratta districts, in 1817. Munro was now stationed at Dharwar. He was temporarily given charge of a brigade. The capitulation of the Chief of Sandur occurred now, and Munro captured one important fort after another without difficulty and he induced the people voluntarily to come under the British sway. Munro had become a General in 1818 and in March of that year

he writes to Stratton, his colleague on the Commission, that he cannot then attend to the business of the Commission: "I shall never be able to command six hours' leisure, which you think enough; and even if I had this leisure, I should be thinking of more immediate concerns than laws and regulations." He writes earlier in the same month that the strenuous work of the previous six months had injured his constitution and he should give up his employment.

General and Mrs Munro set sail from Madras on the 24th January 1819. Their eldest son was born on board the ship on May 30. Soon after they landed in England, at the end of June, he was informed that he was to be re-employed in a higher office in India. He was summoned from the North after a few weeks and was informed of his promotion as Governor of Madras. The rank of Major-General was also conferred on him at the same time, and he was also made a K.C.B. Sir Thomas and Lady Munro arrived in Madras in June 1820.

Munro showed his great interest in the training of civilians for the company's service and wrote a Minute in August 1820. He attended to the re-establishment of native schools. He wrote an important Minute against official interference in caste disputes which he would allow only in grave cases. Even more interesting was one, condemning government officials helping in the conversion of natives to Christianity.

Munro made several tours through the presidency during his term as Governor, after each of which he recorded an account of his doings which may be

read with profit even today. In 1821 he toured the Baramahl. In the autumn of 1822 he went through the districts of Chinglepat, South Arcot, Tanjore, Trichy, Madura, Tinnevelly and Coimbatore, and thence up to the Nilgiris. On the way back to Madras he visited the Cauvery falls.

He applied in September 1823 to be relieved of his duties, urging his ill-health. Meanwhile a wide famine appeared in the province and Munro took wise and strenuous measures to meet the situation. Then the Burmah war appeared on the horizon, and Munro offered his co-operation unreservedly to the Supreme Government for the prosecution of the war. His business was entirely that of "preparation and supply" though his guidance was utilised in the actual plans of the war. His help in the Burmah war was rewarded with a baronetcy in June 1825, and it was also contemplated that he should be appointed Governor-General when the place fell vacant. Owing to the illness of the second son Campbell who was born in September 1823, Lady Munro and he were obliged to leave for England in March 1826. Munro who remained in India died in July 1827 in the Ceded Districts.

Prodigy of Learning

Having considered at the outset the personal disadvantages which should have weighed down Munro's fame in his life-time, we should now proceed to appraise the great and good qualities which render him a hero. Even like Dr Johnson who acquired a marvellous stock of learning while yet

a boy, Munro was a youthful prodigy of learning. As a mere boy he had enough resolution and perseverance to master the Spanish language to be able to study the classic of Cervantes in its original. He had also made remarkable progress in the study of Chemistry, while yet in his teens. A letter of March 1780 shows us how a celebrated scientist who had travelled through most countries of Europe found him not only a match but stood to gain some tips from him. Munro's mother, we learn, was the sister of Dr William Stark, a distinguished anatomist. Within a few years of his arrival in Madras Munro had read Persian literature sufficiently to be able to send home an intelligent account of its general character with suitable illustrations. This letter has the further distinction of quoting an oriental tale on the theme of Shakespeare's "Merchant of Venice," which has been considered worthy of reproduction in the Variorum Shakespeare. It was natural that Munro could not add to his learning in the increasing absorption of official duties, and this did not fail to cause him keen regret: "What an idle life I have led since I came to India; in all that long course of years, which I look back to, sometimes with joy, sometimes with grief, I have scarcely read five plays, and only one novel. I have dissipated my precious time in reading a little history, and a great deal of newspapers, and politics, and Persian." We are to presume that one of the principal motives of Munro's seeking a holiday at home was to make up for lost time in the matter of acquiring learning. His first holiday in Europe was in his forty-eighth year: "He spent a winter in

Edinburgh, mixing in the society of the place, and attending the lectures of several of the professors, particularly those of Dr Hope, professor of Chemistry." The second visit to Europe was more fruitful of results in his acquisition of literary learning, for we have the testimony of Elphinstone after the Munros had stayed with him on their way to Madras from England in 1820: "Sir Thomas and Lady Munro went off. I am more than ever delighted with him; besides all his old sound sense and dignity, all his old good humour, simplicity, and philanthropy, Sir Thomas discovered an acquaintance with literature, a taste and relish for poetry, and an ardent and romantic turn of mind, which counteracted the effect of his age and sternness, and gave the highest possible finish to his character."

Epistolary Artist

The letters of Munro should be regarded as among the best specimens of the art of letter-writing in English. The author puts forth his best powers in them. He writes them with earnestness for he is an exile from home in a distant land and he is eager to give his parents and brothers and sisters at home a complete account of himself and the country in which he is living. The exchange of letters is very slow. Munro complains once in a letter to his father under date 18th April 1796: "It is now near a twelvemonth since the date of my last letter from home." These long intervals have naturally the effect of intensifying the quality of these letters. As Sir Alexander Arbuthnot remarks, "the weekly

post between England and India may be said to have had the same effect upon Indian correspondence that the penny post has had upon English letter writing, viz., that while correspondence has enormously increased, letter writing as an accomplishment has ceased to exist." He adds, "Munro's letters were decidedly long, but they were extremely interesting, and written, as they invariably were, in a clear and legible hand, must have been very charming letters to receive." Munro determines the subject matter of his letters according to the person to whom they are addressed. The letters to his father are full of public questions and events while those to his sister are of personal matters. These latter are perhaps the most charming as revealing the intimate personality of Munro. They exhibit, in Arbuthnot's words, a fund of humour and imagination for which probably few persons who had only a superficial acquaintance with the writer could have given him credit. The letters on public questions have won high recognition. In his notes on Mill's History of British India, Dr Wilson quotes Munro's letters several times, as embodying the most accurate account available of some of the engagements with Haidar. In these accounts Munro never refers to his own part in the action, though it should have been conspicuous, as he was selected in the first year of his service for appointment as quartermaster of a brigade. He had also the good opinion of Sir Eyre Coote, for he mentions in November 1785 that he should have occupied a higher position but for Sir Eyre Coote's death. Of Colonel Newcome we read in Thackeray's novel:

"Ethel declares that her uncle will always talk of other people's courage, and never say a word about his own."

The letters are also full of moral observations which would do credit to one of a much maturer age than Munro. In a letter to his brother James written about 1792 Munro exposes the absurdity of our assuming serious friendship with those who are thrown into our company only by chance. "If among your school friends there are many who are worthy of a warm friendship, you have been more fortunate than I; for though I was happy with my companions at home, when I pass them in review, and recollect their habits, temper, and dispositions, I can hardly see more than one or two whose loss I can with reason regret." Even after leaving school we are apt to be cheated into believing friendship where it does not exist. "It must be confessed there is a satisfaction in the company of men engaged in the same pursuits with ourselves; but it does not follow that they alone are deserving of our friendship, and that there is no happiness in the society of other men." The higher officials of each district station in British India usually form there a club where they pass many idle hours and delude themselves into regarding it a sacred fellowship, while the world outside is perhaps laughing all the time at their snobbery and pettiness. The sources of real friendship are unfathomable. Common tastes do not explain wholly. "I like an orientalist, a politician, a man that walks and swims, or plays fives, because I like all these things myself; but I at the same time have perhaps

a greater friendship for a man who cares for none of these amusements."

Munro was in advance of his age to have made the formulation: "We have never yet had any proof that the knowledge of abstract sciences makes those who cultivate them either more able or more virtuous. I rather suspect they have a contrary tendency." Lord Morley makes the observation in his lecture on Popular Culture that "a man might well be a great geometer, and still be a thoroughly bad reasoner in practical questions." The giving up of what was known as the theory of the formal training of the mind is considered a result of modern understanding.

Munro's letters have always the natural humour which acompanies a downright pithy statement. A playful fancy brightens up his account of the receipt of his sister's picture in the following: "You fell into the hands of James George Graham at Madras; James can tell you who he is; and he marched you off for the Baramahl without giving me any notice of your approach. I happened to call at Kisnagerry a few days after your arrival. There was a meeting of the officers to read some papers respecting the arrangements of the army, and you were introduced. I thought you were one of Graham's female cousins whom he had just returned from visiting, and I declared that it was highly improper that the gravity of our deliberation should be interrupted by women. I had seized you, to force you into your dark retreat, when the secret was discovered. You may easily guess that I granted you a reprieve, and surveyed you with more

inquiring eyes, and with very different feelings, but still I could find no traces of the countenance which I once so well knew."

Son of Mars

Though his essential greatness lay in his success as an administrator, Munro was not without military achievement of a high order. He had an invincible faith in war and corresponding contempt for undisturbed peace. The letter to his sister of October 4, 1795, is a discourse on the benefits of war. He knows that the growth of civilization cannot lead to peace and he is prophetic in the way in which he expresses this idea: "I am still of opinion that war produces many good consequences; those philosophers who prophesy that the millennium is to follow universal civilization, must have shut their eyes on what is passing in the world, and trusted entirely to intellectual life, otherwise they should have seen that in the proportion to the progress of time and the arts, war becomes more frequent and more general, and this I consider to be the true end of civilization." War always improves the morale of the people: "Don't you think the calamities of the American War have made us more virtuous than we were, and that more Britons have gone to heaven since these chastisements, than did in all the preceding part of the century?" This cessation of war robs us of refined pleasures also: "How insipid would poetry be without romances and heroic poems, and history without convulsions and revolutions! What would a library be with

nothing but Shenstone and a few volumes of sermons? What would become of all those patriotic citizens who spend half their lives in coffee houses talking of the British Lion if he were to be laid asleep by an unfortunate millennium?"

Munro was perpetually longing for military service and was keenly disappointed when not getting the chance. The lucid accounts he has presented of the campaigns against Haidar and Tipu are sufficient testimony to his understanding of military matters. We also know of the military consultations which General Wellesley thought worth having with Munro.

When the Governor-General was preparing a campaign against the Pindaris and the Mahrattas, Munro wrote to Lord Hastings in January 1817 suggesting prompt action and requesting for himself the command of the subsidiary forces of Haidarabad and Nagpur. "I am senior to any of the officers now employed in that quarter; I have seen as much service as any officer in the Madras army, having with the exception of Lord Wellesley's short campaign of 1803 been in every service with the army since June 1780, when Haidar Ali invaded the Karnatik." He did not however obtain the command but was given the Commissionership of the southern Mahratta country. He wrote to the Governor-General his deep regret at the disappointment but accepting the situation as it was. The secret of Munro's military success lay in his moral power, while in civil administration he knew equally to avail himself of military strength. The first event in his southern Mahratta Commission was the sur-

render by the Chief of Sandur who came out of his fort and delivered up the keys and implored protection. The moral power which underlay his military strength may be likened to the secret of the military success of another modern hero, General Gordon. Here is an extract from Gordon's Journal: "I was met by the son of Sebehr a nice-looking lad of twenty-two years, and rode through the robber-bands. There were about three thousand of them—men and boys. I rode to a tent in the camp. The whole body of chiefs was dumbfounded at my coming among them. After a glass of water I went back, telling the son of Sebehr to come with his family to my divan; they all came."

While at Sandur, a brigadier's Commission with command of the division was bestowed on Munro. With only five companies of sepoys he entered the enemy's country and won the good will of the people. He appointed military amildars to raise peons and seize the districts. He also captured the important strongholds of Gadak, Damal and Hubli. He proclaimed the offer of protection to the cultivators and the prohibition of the payment of tribute to the Peshwa. Referring to this achievement Malcolm writes in a letter to Mr Secretary Adams on the 17th February 1818: "I send you a copy of a public letter from *Tom Munro Saheb* written for the information of Sir Thomas Hislop. If this letter makes the same impression upon you that it did upon me, we shall all recede, as this extraordinary man comes forward. We use vulgar means, and go on zealously and actively, and courageously enough; but how different his part of

the drama! Insulated in an enemy's country, with no military means, whatever, (five disposable companies of sepoys are nothing) he forms the plan of subduing the country, expelling the army by which it is occupied, and collecting the dues that are due to the enemy, through the means of the inhabitants themselves, aided and supported by a few irregular infantry, whom he invites from the neighbouring provinces for that purpose. His plan which is at once simple and great, is successful in a degree that a mind like his could alone have anticipated. The country comes into his hands by the most legitimate of all modes, the zealous and spirited efforts of the natives to place themselves under his rule, and to enjoy the benefits of a government which, when administered by a man like him, is one of the best in the world. Munro, they say, has been aided in this great work by his local reputation,—but that adds to his title to praise. His popularity in the quarter where he is placed is the result of long experience, of his talents and virtues, and rests exactly upon that basis of which an able and good man may be proud."

Gifted Ruler

Munro was the most industrious of public servants. Getting up very early in the morning he did not go to bed till midnight. In a letter dated Bellari, 17th May 1795, he gives us an idea of his work: "Where I am now, I have no choice of study, or society, or amusement. I go from village to village, with my tent, settling the rents of the inhabi-

tants; and this is so tedious and teasing a business, that it leaves room for nothing else,—for I have no hour in the day that I can call my own. At this moment, while I am writing, there are a dozen of people talking around me; it is now twelve o'clock, and they have been coming and going in parties ever since seven in the morning, when I began the letter. They have frequently interrupted me for an hour at a time." In his earlier days at Vellore, the retiring hour at night was between eleven and two. In his later years he went to bed at ten or half past ten. His daily routine as Governor is described to us by Gleig. Early in the morning he rode on horseback four mornings in the week and the other three he gave up to the "natives." After dressing and reading and writing he attended breakfast at eight. For an hour from the beginning of the meal he interviewed the Europeans who were also invited to partake of the meal. Between half past nine and four he was left undisturbed to attend to public business. Dinner was at four except on special occasions of large parties when the hour was put off to eight. In the evening he went out on a drive with Lady Munro. Tea came at eight and an aide-de-camp read out to him later either the debates in parliament or a novel of Sir Walter Scott's or some other new book.

He remarks in one of his letters that "Fortune during the greatest part of my Indian life, had made a drudge of me." To visualise the untiring energy with which he carried out his official duties we may seek a modern counterpart in Sir M. Visveswarayya whose administration of Mysore was a record

achievement, with its ceaseless endeavour and original methods.

Munro laid down the first principles of administration. He was appointed in 1814 head of a Commission to overhaul the judicial system which was at the time very defective and failed to cope with the cases which arose. It was exotic in character, the judges having been all Europeans who possessed little knowledge of the customs and manners of the people. The collectors were relieved of magisterial power and the police attached to the zilla judges. The revenue collection fell into confusion as the result of this, for reference had to be made to the judicial courts for the smallest disputes in the levying of revenue. The permanent settlement introduced by Lord Cornwallis proved very unjust by giving the zamindars, who had been only collectors of revenue, unreasonable power over the tenants who were real owners of the land. The ryotwari system recognises the independence of small holdings, and the rent is fixed for thirty years or a less period, though every year the collector investigates the extent of the holdings, assisted by the subordinate native officials. Munro disapproved of annual settlements as a barbarous system. All the years of Munro's work lay really in settling the rents of farmers as he toured from place to place.

Though never cruel or unjust Munro had a determined manner of setting about his business. The way in which he reduced to submission the poligars of the Bellary district illustrates this. These petty chiefs who held their forts and terrorised the people round about them had never paid their

peshkash regularly either to the Mussalman or to the Mahratta power before the advent of the British. What Munro did is best told in the Bellary District Gazetteer: "Munro assessed the whole of the poligars at the highest peshkash which they had paid either to the Nizam or to Haidar and if they declined or neglected to pay, set Dugald Campbell's troops or his own military peons to enforce punctuality, or in the alternative, capture their strongholds. One by one, with wonderful rapidity and astonishingly little parade or fuss, they were reduced to order or dispossessed, and within a year there remained no force which was able to make any formidable opposition to Government." We learn that Munro's military peons acted effectively in this matter of reduction by getting at the followers of the poligars and disabling them to the extent of obliging them to flee to some distant province. And Munro did all this, succeeding finally in his purpose, without consulting his higher authorities. The Directors in England condemned his action as disingenuous and asked for his explanation threatening him with dismissal. Munro replied that in the interests of the Government the poligars received such treatment as they deserved by their previous history. The matter ended there.

To know the full Munro, we should set against his firmness towards the Bellary poligars his sympathetic solicitude for the welfare of the Salem weavers. Peremptory methods had been adopted to recruit weavers for the service of the Company. Captain Read, Collector of Baramahl, directed the weavers of every denomination to obey the sum-

mons of the Commercial resident "without least delay or hesitation, on pain of being very severely punished." Threat of punishment and actual confinement were alleged by the weavers as having been resorted to. Then there was also the tyranny of the Dubashes. The prices paid to the weavers had become inadequate after the war. In his letter of November 1792 Munro pleaded that the weavers who were still in Tipu's country would not be induced to come if compulsion were used against them. They should be paid also higher wages. The first protest not availing, Munro repeated it in stronger language in October 1793. He pointed out that if Tipu had not been driven to be tyrannical, no weavers would have been left with the Company. By August 1795 Charles Carpenter, the brother-in-law of Sir Walter Scott, became the commercial Resident at Salem, and matters were smoothened.

We are not probably much interested in any particular revenue system as such. But we are bound to admire each separate idea implied in the administrative system developed by Munro. Before fixing any revenue it was necessary to study carefully the records of previous years to find out the peculiar terms which governed a tenure. The second important insistence was the larger association of Indian functionaries both in the revenue and in the Judicial services: "When we have determined the principles on which the land revenue is to be fixed, the next question is by what agency it is to be managed? There can be no doubt that it ought, as far as practicable, to be native." Munro is aware

of many who have recommended the entire abolition of the native agency. He regards it arrogance that the English should think it possible to do the work of a nation. What is more the natives are as good as Europeans, if not better in the discharge of their duties. "They are in general better accountants, more patient and laborious, more intimately acquainted with the state of the country and the manners and customs of the inhabitants, and are altögether more efficient men in business." Munro thought the natives specially successful on the judicial side: "I doubt if in civil judicature we have the same advantage, yet, or even can have, until we leave to the natives the decision of almost all original suits." The whole principle of Munro's reform was to give a real indigenous basis to the administration. Towards securing this he laid emphasis on the village potail, the taliaris and the panchayats. As may be expected Munro encountered the keenest opposition in the carrying out of these ideas. But he waited patiently to demonstrate the practical success of each of them. "All doubts as to the popularity of the panchayats among the natives must now have been removed by the reports of some of the ablest servants of the Company, which explain their nature, and show that they were in general use over extensive provinces." The panchayats were abolished later but have been revived since. From first to last Munro was really absorbed in the revenue administration. He believed that the knowledge of revenue business would be useful in any department of administration. Revenue training was a good preparation

for the judiciary. The original shaping of the modern Indian Civil Service was really effected by Sir Thomas Munro.

His clear understanding of Indian conditions and sense of fairness to Indian interests are brought out in his Memorandum on opening the trade with India to the outports, of 1st February 1813. In the first place India was so advanced and self-sufficient as not to need imports: "In India almost every article which the inhabitants require is made cheaper and better than in Europe. Among these are all cotton and silk manufactures, leather, paper, domestic utensils of brass and iron, and implements of agriculture. Their coarse woollens, though bad, will always keep their ground, from their superior cheapness. Their finer camlets are warmer and more lasting than ours." Then Indian conservatism had to be reckoned with. For centuries India had carried on a maritime trade with other countries but was not induced to import new articles from them. Yet the people suffer from no absolute prejudice: "Their prejudices extend only to intoxicating liquors, and certain prohibited kinds of food." Munro recognises the temperate habits of the Indian elsewhere also: "In dress and every kind of dissipation but drinking, they are at least our equals." Munro could not anticipate the general westernization that came over India in the later decades of the nineteenth century, before which the old conservatism broke down and even the prejudice against liquors did not hold out, though only in a small section of the people, so that India became a very good market for English goods. This change should

have been wrought chiefly by the progress of English education which was firmly established by the famous Minute of Macaulay whose foresight as an empire-builder had not perhaps calculated the possibilities in trade expansion.

To increase the exports to India, the purchasing capacity of Indians should be improved and their special tastes studied by the manufacturers. The purchasing capacity could be improved by the lightening of taxes: "When we relinquish the barbarous system of annual settlements; when we make over the lands either in very long leases or in perpetuity, to the present occupants; and when we have convinced them, by making no assessments above the fixed rent, for a series of years, that they are actually proprietors of the soil, we shall see a demand for European articles of which we have at present no conception."

Munro disapproves the unfair tariff by which Indian goods exported to England were subjected to heavier duties than English goods sent to India. "India is the country that has been worst used in the new arrangement. All her products ought undoubtedly to be imported freely into England upon paying the same duties, and no more, which English products pay in India. When I see what is done in Parliament against India, I think I am reading about Edward III and the Flemings." Besides imposing heavy duties several methods of tyrannical oppression and cruelty were resorted to, to crush Indian industries with a view to profiting English manufactures.

In the same Memorandum Munro considers the question of European adventurers in India and states that they are very unlikely to settle in India. There was legal prohibition against their owning lands in India. Also " they could not become manufacturers as the superior skill and frugality of the natives would render all competition with them unavailing."

In studying the work of Munro as an administrator we cannot fail to note his Minute on the freedom of the press. He would allow the existence of a press under restraint but not without it. He explains the two chief points of restraint as relating to attacks on officials and on the religions of the people. A free press is undesirable in India because the people are not homogeneous. The natives would lose all respect for authority by a free press and they would be actuated to throw down a foreign domination and establish a national government. The Indian army might also be induced to rebel, and anarchy caused in the country. This naturally was not in the interests of the people either, apart from the danger caused to the British continuance in India. The safer course for the country was for the people to learn the idea of freedom through education.

Munro has been accused of short-sightedness, but the issues were clear enough to him. That the continuance of the British power in India and the freedom of the Indian people were incompatible with each other was a bit of plain speaking on Munro's part. It does not matter if he was mistaken in connecting the freedom of the press with a possible rebellion in the army and if the Indian Mutiny was

not caused by the activity of the press. Writing in 1881, Sir Alexander Arbuthnot may feel complacent about the excellence of the Anglo-Indian press, and refer with a patronising air to the satisfactory conduct of native newspapers in English and throw contempt on the vernacular papers. No one can deny that the present political movement in India for freedom and independence has been made possible only by the existence of a free press. What is more, the lessons in violent journalism may be said to have been taught the Indian press only by the Anglo-Indian newspapers. The following paragraph from "Rise and Fulfilment of British Rule in India" by Edward Thompson will be found relevant here: "No educated Indian has ever forgotten the lesson of the Ilbert Bill. They were accustomed to rulers who could be influenced by cajolery, entreaty, bribery, or threats or revolt, but it was an entirely new experience to see a Government, and especially the aloof and powerful British Government, deflected from its purpose by newspaper abuse and an exhibition of bad manners. In later days Indian nationalism was to acquire some of its technique from the suffrage movement in England, and more from Irish Home Rulers, but it was the successful agitation against the Ilbert Bill which decided the general lines upon which the Indian politician was to run his campaigns. It is significant that the two years which followed this agitation saw the foundation of the Indian National Congress and the European Association."

Apart from the virtue of plain speaking, Munro was not insincere in thinking that the freedom of

NOT FOR LENDING

the press would do harm to the people of the country because according to him freedom of the press would logically mean a revolution, and a revolution was a check to progress. He had been a severe critic of the French Revolution and would dread all revolutions later.

There were obviously two leading instincts in Munro, the first of empire-building and the other, of providing a moral basis to that empire. The instinct for empire-building is made obvious from the earliest years of his service in India. He understood quickly the nature of the British power in India. He desired a vigorous policy to be pursued against Haidar and Tipu, and was always for the British power taking over new territory into its hands. Once territory was acquired, it was necessary to organise its administration on the best possible basis. A long Minute written when he had been four years Governor of Madras, on the 31st December 1824 begins as follows: "We are now masters of a very extensive empire, and we should endeavour to secure and improve it by a good internal administration." Towards the end of the same Minute Munro contemplates the future: "We should look upon India not as a temporary possession, but as one which is to be maintained permanently, until the natives shall in some future age have abandoned most of their superstitions and prejudices, and become sufficiently entitled to frame a regular government for themselves, and to conduct and preserve it. Whenever such a time shall arise, it will probably be best for both countries that the British control over India should be gradually withdrawn.

That the desirable change here contemplated may in some after-age be effected in India, there is no cause to despair."

Another instance of far-sightedness as an empire-builder is provided in Munro's note giving instructions on the duty of a Magistrate in caste disputes: "He (the magistrate) ought, in all disputes between the castes, to take no part beyond what may be necessary in order to preserve the peace; and he ought to punish the rioters on both sides, in cases of affray, for breach of the peace, and on the whole to conduct himself in such a manner as to make it evident to the people that he favours the pretensions of neither side, but looks only to the maintenance of the peace."

Devoted Son

Whatever the outward manner looked like, Munro's devotion to his parents was of the profoundest character. Like all the heroes of the world he cherished a deep affection for his mother. The earliest reward he earned in life, for the translation of some Spanish papers which he performed, in his boyhood, he gave away to his mother. A concern for the comfort and happiness of his parents was ever in his mind, even when he underwent hardships in his early years of the Indian service.

In the fourth year of his stay in Madras Munro recalls the scenes of his parental home: "I have had it frequently observed, that most men, by a few years' absence from their native country, be-

come estranged from their old acquaintances, and look back with indifference on the scenes of their earlier years. I have never yet been able to divest myself of my partiality for home; nor can I now reflect without regret on the careless, indolent life I led in my father's house, when time fled away undisturbed by those anxious thoughts which possess every one who seeks earnestly for advancement in the world. I often see my father busied with his tulip beds, and my mother with her myrtle pots; I see you drawing, and James lost in meditation: and all these things seem as much present to me as they did when I was amongst you. Sometimes, when I walk on the sea-shore, I look across the waves, and please myself with fancying that I see a distant continent amongst the clouds, where I imagine you all to be." Though disappointed in the expectation of promotion for himself his thoughts are all for his parents, as seen in a letter of November 1785 to his mother: "Though my situation is not such as I might have expected, had Sir Eyre Coote lived, yet I still look forward with hope, and do not despair of seeing it bettered. The only cause I have for repining, is my inability to assist my father as I wish, and the hearing that your spirits are so much affected by the loss of his fortune." He mentions in the same letter the remittances he expects to send them: "Alexander and I have agreed to remit my father 100 l. a year between us. If the arrears which Lord Macartney detained are paid, I will send 200 l in the course of the year 1786." The father's debts are a concern to him even ten years later: "I wish we had a statement of

my father's debts, that we might know what part of the principal we could discharge without incurring any great loss, by withdrawing our money from the advantage of high interest." A letter of 1800 shows no decrease in the warmth of Munro's solicitude for the comforts of his parents: "I am sorry you have quitted your country-house for so trifling a consideration as the expense, which could never occasion any inconvenience in me to discharge. There is indeed no way in which I could employ my money, that would yield me half so much pleasure as to hear that it had enabled you to enjoy the country air—to have your own dairy and garden, and to walk in the fields,—a recreation of which you were so fond at Northside."

The death of the mother and the sinking into insensibility of the father end naturally Munro's solicitude for his parents.

Comrade of the People

More than filial and domestic affections, the most remarkable quality of Munro was his real attachment to the country of his adoption. A sympathy for the natives to the degree of annoying his own compatriots has been indicated already. We may pause to consider here Munro's relations with the natives. We have heard of marks of affection and veneration bestowed on him by the Hindus. He was called "Mandava Rishi," because a Rishi transcends ordinary men and is almost an immortal Personal purity and self-abnegation command the greatest respect in this country and Munro repre-

sented both the virtues. There is no limit to the grateful response which the Indian people will show to a man of infinite industry and an absolute sense of fairness, who at the same time is personally pure, and lives the life of a self-denying stoic. It is no surprise that admiration for Munro should run to excess. Munro's genuine comradeship with the people touched them. The easy accessibility of Munro to the people was some thing extraordinary and almost unimaginable in modern days. Crowds of people met him wherever he camped. He listened to them always with patience and treated them with courtesy. He refers to the farmers who came to see him as "gentlemen," and even after the lapse of many years his attachment to his "friends" in Baramahl drew forth his tenderest sentiments. The habit of regarding the people over whom he was set to govern, as "friends" continued to the very end of his life, as his last and fatal tour was undertaken to see his "friends" in the Ceded Districts. Even the desire to return to Madras to his wife does not deter him from paying a visit to Baramahl on one occasion. In a letter to his sister dated 13th October 1821 Munro writes: "The distance from Bangalore to Madras by the direct route is two hundred and eight miles, but I have come round by the Baramahl which is about fifty miles farther, both for the purpose of seeing the inhabitants, and making some enquiries into the state of the country, and of revisiting scenes where, about thirty years ago, I spent seven very happy years. They were the first of my public life, and I almost wish it had ended there; for it has ever since, with

the exception of the time I was at home, been a series of unceasing hard labour." The courage and confidence with which Munro met the people at all times is made clear from the following extract from his letter dated 12th December 1801. The occasion arose when Mr Thackeray, a subordinate Collector of Bellary was nearly killed in a kind of rising provoked over revenue collections: "Why did I suffer him, you say, to be without a guard? Because I think he is much safer without one. I traversed Canara in every direction unaccompanied by a single Sepoy or military Peon, at a time when it was in a much more distracted state than the Ceded Districts have ever been, without meeting, or even apprehending any insult. I do the same here:—there is not a single man along with me, nor had I one last year when I met all the Gurrumconda Poligars in congress, attended by their followers. I had deprived them of all their cowls, and they knew I meant to reduce them to the level of Potails, yet they never showed me the smallest disrespect. The natives of India, not excepting Poligars, have, in general, a good deal of reverence for public authority. They suppose that collectors act only by orders from a superior power; and that, as they are not actuated by private motive, they ought not to become the objects of resentment. I therefore consider the subordinate collectors and myself as being perfectly safe without guards; and that being without them, we get much sooner acquainted with the people."

Munro's intimate knowledge of the farmer extended to that of his wife as well. Here is an

account of a rural Fury: "In this caste the women manage everything, and the men hardly ever venture to disobey their orders. It is they who buy, and sell, lend, and borrow: and though the man comes to the Cutchery to have his rent settled, he always receives his instructions before leaving home. If he gives up any point of them, however trifling, he is sure to incur her resentment. She orders him to stay at home next day, and she sallies forth herself in great indignation, denouncing the whole tribe of revenue servants. On her arrival at the Cutchery, she goes on for near an hour with a very animated speech, which she had probably begun some hours before, at the time of her leaving her own home,—the substance of it is, that they are a set of rascals for imposing upon her poor and simple husband. She usually concludes with a string of interrogations. 'Do you think I can plough the land without bullocks?—that I can make gold or that I can raise it by selling this cloth?' She points, as she says this, to the dirty rag with which she is half covered, which she had put on for the occasion, and which no man would choose to touch with the end of a stick. If she gets what she wants she goes away in a good humour; but if not, she delivers another philippic, not in a small female voice, but in that of a boatswain—for by long practice she is louder and hoarser than a man. As the cutcherry people only laugh at her, she carries her eloquence where she knows she can make it be attended to. She returns to her unfortunate husband, and probably does not confine herself entirely to logical arguments. She is perhaps too full of cares and

anxieties to sleep that night; and if any person passes her house about daybreak, or a little before, he will certainly find her busy spinning cotton. If I have not seen, I have at least often heard, the women spinning early in the morning, when it was so dark that I could scarcely follow the road. It is the farmers' women who make most of the thread used in all the cotton manufactures of India."

The story of one of his Indian friends helps to make vivid the comradeship he cherished with the people whom he governed. In his letter to Colonel Read dated 28th September 1802, he refers to "your old friend, Lachman Row." Unfortunately Munro's ignorance of Sanskrit misses the correct spelling, Lakshman Rao. Though he started his career as Read's man, Lachman Row became later Munro's man to a greater degree. The Salem District Gazetteer describes him as Munro's factotum. We wish Lachman Row had kept a journal and recorded therein an account of his daily meetings with Munro during the latter's career from Read's assistant in the Baramahls to Governor of Madras. Munro should have treated Lachman Row "not as a mere native." We know from the life of Rammohun Roy by Miss Collet: "it is usually stated by Rammohun Roy's biographers that a written agreement was signed by Mr. Digby to the effect that Rammohun should never be kept standing (a custom enforced by European civil servants towards natives of the highest rank) in the presence of the Collector, and that no order should be issued to him as a mere Hindu functionary."

Lachman Row was a persona grata with another European, Captain Graham, who had been Munro's colleague in the Baramahls. Both Graham and Lachman Row combined to build the new Peṭa in Krishnagiri in 1794 and spent of their own money in beautifying it. Descended of a Deshpandi family belonging to the neighbourhood of Bijapur, Lakshman Row was Tannah Sheristadar of Hosakota for eight years under Tipu and went to Kolar after Tipu's fall, where Colonel Read appointed him on Rs. 100 to the supply Department. He held various posts later, drawing as much as Rs. 1,400 at one time. He accompanied Munro on his tours as Governor and was later Sheristadar at Trichinopoly. On Munro's death he wanted to retire but was persuaded to continue till 1834 when he retired on a pension of Rs. 265.

Sceptical Philosopher

Munro's comradeship with the people was not disturbed by differences of religion. We are not without the means of inferring what Munro's own personal faith must have been. That he was not zealous in Christian observances is made clear from his making it one of the objections to marriage that his religious freedom may be curtailed thereby. The last of his stipulations before he entered on marriage was to be this: "I am to have liberty of conscience, and to attend church as often as I think proper." It is not irrelevant to mention here that Munro's friend Elphinstone was a reputed heretic devoid of all ardent feelings in religion. H. G. Keene

tions. In the Bellary district occurs the story connected with the tomb of Raghavendraswami. It has a landed endowment from the Diwan of the Governor of Adoni who ruled from 1662 to 1687. The following occurs in the Bellary District Gazetteer: "The endowment being threatened with resumption, Munro, it is said, came to make enquiries. After removing the boots and taking off the hat he approached the grave. The saint thereupon emerged from his tomb and met him. They conversed together for some time regarding the resumption, but though the saint was visible and audible to Munro, who was himself according to the people semi-divine, none of the others who were there could either see or hear what he said. The discussion ended, Munro returned to his tents and quashed the proposal to resume the endowment. Being offered some consecrated rice, he accepted it and ordered it to be used in the preparation of his meal for that day." According to another version of the story, Munro had no idea of the identity of the person to whom he was speaking. He knew him to be a wise and persuasive Brahmin and he told the others about him, but they knew nothing of him. One need not be semi-divine to be spoken to by the dead. When Prince Hamlet saw and spoke to his father's spirit in his mother's chamber, that lady knew not the ghost at all, and wondered at her son's hallucination.

A similar story is told in the Cudappah district. Munro threatened the resumption of the land attached to a temple. When the temple priest protested, Munro challenged him to demonstrate the

god. The priest prayed, and Munro saw the god pass along riding on a white horse, and he was convinced.

A story about the temple at Kadiri in the Anantapur district is told as follows in the Anantapur District Gazetteer: "Munro began his administration by resuming all inam lands preparatory to an investigation of their titles. When he expressed his intention of confiscating all the temple lands, the Brahmans were in great sorrow. One day when Munro went out walking, a tiger met him and sprang on him but finally left him uninjured. Munro was picked up senseless and carried to his bungalow in a palanquin. After two days he consulted the chief Brahman of the place about the reason for this occurrence, and was assured by him that the tiger was the *swami* of the temple and had come to give him a gentle hint that he should be as merciful to his pagoda as he himself was to him. Munro promptly restored the inam." The Lepakshi temple, also in the Anantapur district, remembers a legend that Munro felt more liberal towards it when the deity was described as a form of Vishnu than when it was mentioned as Virabhadra.

We have heard of a collector of Chingleput who erected a temple to Rama at Madurantakam. Despairing over the annual breaches caused in the local tank, the collector vowed, it is said, to build a temple to Rama (materials had been gathered for the purpose earlier but were lying in neglect), if the breach was averted. So it was, even after a great rain and storm had occurred, and the collector who had a vision of Rama standing over the

heaving waters, set to the building the very next day. The stone inscription mentioning Lionel Price as the donor may be read even to-day.

In the famous story of Rāmadaṣ of Bhadrachalam, devotee of Rama, Ramadas's Muhammadan master Thanisha was privileged to see Sri Rama who came to deliver moneys to him that Ramadas might be set free from prison.

That a non-Hindu might also benefit by Hindu prayers is an idea with which Munro was acquainted. In his letter dated 6th August 1799, he writes of Tipu: "Bigot as he was, his apprehensions rendered him superstitious enough to induce him to invite the aid of Hindu prayers and ceremonies to avert the evil which threatened him, and to call for an Hindoo astrologer to draw a favourable omen from the stars. With a man of this description he spent the last morning of his life; he desired him to consult the heavens. The man answered he had done so, and that they were unfavourable unless peace was made. He was ordered to look again, but returned the same answer. Tippoo gave him money, and desired him to pray for him, and then drank water out of a black stone as a charm against misfortune." Munro is importing Roman ideas when he refers to drawing a favourable omen from the stars. The Hindu astrologer casts the horoscope and calculates the influence of the planets, whether favourable or unfavourable. Munro does not suggest that the astrologer promised a favourable turn of events to flatter Tipu, he has regarded the character as genuine.

Yet another story is of an Englishman who put himself to the expense of building a Hindu temple. Governor Collet of Madras had a Dubash Veeriah who was constantly going to Conjeevaram to worship at the famous shrine of Varadaraja there. Collet resolved to obviate these journeys of Veeriah, and helped him, we learn, with money to reproduce the Conjeevaram shrine in the neighbourhood of Madras. So we have Colletpetta, corrupted in modern times to "Kaladipet." We do not have all the particulars of the story, but it has been surmised that Collet's generosity was prompted by something more than his solicitude for the assistant's religious needs, he should have been attracted in some way to the Hindu faith himself.

A beautiful story worth quoting here is what Bradshaw has told in his book: "A legend survives in various forms with reference to his journey through the Cudapah district. One version is, that while riding through a narrow gorge, where the Papaghni breaks through the hills, Munro suddenly looked up at the steep cliffs above, and then said, "What a beautiful garland of flowers they have stretched across the valley?" His companions all looked, and saw nothing. "Why there it is," said he, "all made of gold." Again they looked, and saw nothing; but one of his native servants said, "Alas! a great and good man will soon die!" Stories like this on the eve of death are so usually told that it will be foolish to reject them summarily.

Munro's attachment to and partiality for Hindu temples was a fact calculated to endear him to the

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people in no small degree. His sympathetic attitude to their religion was part of the complete identity of interests which he developed with the people. Conformity to some of the religious observances of the Hindus did him no harm, they were sanctified, because they were followed by millions. In the words of Matthew Arnold: "The consecration of common consent, antiquity, public establishment, long used rites, national edifices, is everything for religious worship." Was it not just Roman wisdom to be deferential to the gods of an alien people brought under political subjection?

Tolerant and sympathetic as Munro was towards the Hindus, we see him treating them to a rude joke on one occasion. On the 18th June 1795 he records in his Journal that the farmers of a place twelve miles north of Senkledroog complained to him against a conjurer who burnt the villages and suggested that two of the offender's front teeth should be pulled out. Munro met the suggestion thus: "I replied, that this could not be done till he was taken; but that, in the meantime, there was another remedy, equally simple, at hand, to defend themselves from him in future: any person who had any suspicion of his having evil designs upon himself, had only to get two of his own teeth drawn, which would secure both himself and his property against all the art of the enemy. I said I had some years ago parted with my own teeth; and offered, if they would accompany me back to get them all made magic-proof at the same cheap rate. They asked leave to go home and consult about my proposal, and promised to give me their

answer in the morning: but I suspect that I shall hear no more of the matter." It is to be presumed that Munro never felt the same rude way when farmers went to him with complaints later, he was thirty-five years old when he wrote the above, and luckily he continued thirty-two years later in India, to show that he outlived his early rudeness.

There was apparently also a savage instinct lurking somewhere in Munro which burst out occasionally. We learn that he had a taste for throwing stones. His friend Read gives the following account: "When I joined him, I perceived a stone in his hand, and inquired what he meant to do with it. 'I am just waiting,' answered he, 'till all the Brahmans go away, that I may have one good throw at that dog upon the wall,' and added, 'whenever I *wanted to play myself*, in this or any other manner, in the Baramahl, I used to go either into Macleod's or Graham's division.'"

The Land He Loved

That Munro loved India is not a formal but profound statement. This love of India is nearly the whole explanation of the life of the man whose association with this country extended over forty-eight years and whose death occurred in this country at the end of that long period of time. Arrived in Madras Roads during the pleasant season of January, it was easy for Munro to be charmed with the new country. He sighted the simple catamarans and the dark men with conical

caps on their heads who steered them with incredible skill. Then he met a Madrasi in most respectable clothes who offered to take service under him and look after all his personal needs. Munro was struck favourably by the Indian complexion, like Bishop Heber in a later generation who wrote "that the deep bronze tint is more naturally agreeable to the human eye than the fair skins of Europe, since we are not displeased with it even in the first instance, while it is well known that to them a fair complexion gives the idea of ill-health, and of that sort of deformity which in our eyes belongs to an Albino." Passing along the streets Munro was impressed by the whiteness and gloss of the buildings plastered with chunam. "They were encrusted with a fine white mortar, made of burnt shells, looking like polished marble." Groves of cocoanuts, plantains and areca palms met and feasted the eye. The bright blue sky and the coolness of the weather contrasted favourably with the black sky and frosty chill of Scotland. The streets of the Indian quarter bore marks of festive decoration, for "pongal" had occurred only a few days earlier. Even bulls and cows had been decorated, and men wore holiday clothes.

A temporary shock occurred no doubt when the "respectable" servant made away with Munro's clothes and never returned. But Munro read his Juvenal to real purpose and remembered the Thirteenth Satire, to be able to forgive the felon. Munro was taking in eagerly the Madras gossip and learning all about the big men of the place. Mr Haliburton, Member of the Board of Revenue, and Per-

sian Translator, was a relation of the Wizard of the North, Sir Walter Scott. There had been a conflict between him and Paupiah the Brahmin Dubash to Governor Holland, and people were busy canvassing opinion on both sides. Munro had a glimpse of the Brahmin while he went along in his palanquin, wearing a spotless white gown-like shirt and a large cotton turban. Even the sounds of the local languages pleased Munro, because of the vocalic terminations and paucity of guttural consonants.

Soon after arrival in Madras Munro began to work at his Persian. According to Gleig: "He therefore applied himself with diligence, from the day of his arrival at Madras, to the study of the native languages, and became in consequence, one of the few Englishmen who in those days can be said to have made any real progress in them." Unfortunately there is no mention of Munro's study of Sanskrit. He must have been another illustration of the German indictment that the British have in the main remained ignorant of the great culture of the people over whom they have acquired political domination. By his ignorance of Sanskrit Munro lost the opportunity of reading about the duty of man in the Bhagavat Gita, and the great truths occurring in the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, and the Vedas. A knowledge of Sanskrit should have helped him at least to spell place names correctly, like "Dharmapuri" which he corrupts to "Dherampoori."

It was however only after leaving Madras for the mofussil that Munro came into intimate contact with the people of this country, and he seems to

have had two good reasons for leaving Madras: "But neither the climate of the capital, nor a constant association with gentlemen who persisted in adhering to the exclusive use of their mother tongue, proved agreeable to his tastes or sense of duty." The dislike of the climate of the capital could have started only after some time, for he was all admiration at the beginning: "Men are much more boyish in this country than in Europe, and in spite of the sun, take, I believe, more exercise, and are, however strange it may appear, better able to undergo fatigue, unless on some remarkably hot days. I never could make half the violent exertions at home that I have made here." Munro's appreciation of the Indian climate must be accounted a major discovery on a par with Dupleix's about the training of sepoys. If he had had the opportunity, Munro would have disagreed with the contention that hill-stations help Europeans to do their official work efficiently. As the novels of Anglo-Indian society by authors like Hilton Brown have made it out, it is only affairs far other than official work that thrive at hill stations.

That the Indian scene was more attractive to Munro than anything in England or Scotland is clear from numerous letters of his. In a letter dated 12th December 1819 he states: "I like the Indian climate and country much better than our own." The following is from a letter written at Trippitore (Tirupathur) on the 13th October 1821: "We get attached to all those places where we have at any former period lived pleasantly among our

friends, and the attachment grows with the increasing distance of time; but independently of this cause, the natural beauty of the place is enough to make any one partial to it. There is nothing to be compared to it in England, nor, what you will think higher praise, in Scotland. It stands in the midst of an extensive fertile valley, from ten to forty miles wide, and sixty or seventy long, surrounded by an amphitheatre of mountains of every shape, many of them nearly twice as high as the Grampians. The country here among the hills has none of the cold and stinted appearance which such countries have at home. The largest trees, the richest soil, and the most luxuriant vegetation, are easily found among naked masses of granite at the bottom of the hills." Under date 18th October 1826 he writes: "I am anxious to leave India, yet I shall leave it with a heavy heart. I have spent so much of my life in it, I am so well acquainted with the people, its climate is so fine, and its mountain scenery so wild and beautiful, that I almost regret it is not my own country."

If men from the temperate zone find that they can turn out more work in the Indian climate than in their own, it is not a surprise that the natives are an industrious lot. "Learned men who write of India begin by talking of the sun, and then tell us that its vertical rays make the natives indolent; but, notwithstanding all this, the farmers are, at least, as industrious as those of Europe, and their women more so. They owe their poverty to their government and neither to their idleness nor the sun." Munro's discovery is not unlike what was

made by General Gordon who came out to India as Private Secretary to the Viceroy in 1880: "To tell him that debt and famine and war were the natural results of India under a really wise and just system of government was not to convince him that it was true." He had a fatal tendency to go to the root of matters, and to ask himself, for instance, if debt and famine and war were the natural consequences of life in India, had not the fact of millions sterling in the shape of pay for British employees, pensions, cost of foreign troops, of unprofitable stores, etc., annually taken out of the country, something to say to this triple conglomerate of misery." Again Butler (biographer of Gordon in the English Men of Action series) writes: "Statecraft, official tradition, the policy of predecessors, all would have gone down before the simple reality of the first village he came to being in want of bread, while the vessels at the nearest port were shipping wheat to England or sending rice to China."

The simple habits of Indians called forth Munro's admiration. He sketches their life correctly: "Their simple mode of living, dictated both by caste and climate, renders all our furniture and ornaments for the decoration of the house and the table utterly unserviceable to the Hindoos; living in low mud-houses, eating on the bare earth, they cannot require the various articles used among us. They have no tables; their houses are not furnished, except those of the rich, which have a small carpet, or a few mats and pillows. The Hindoos eat alone, many from caste in the open air, others under sheds, and out of leaves of trees, in preference to plates.

But this is the picture perhaps of the unfortunate native reduced to poverty by European oppression under the Company's monopoly? No—it is equally that of the highest and richest Hindoo in every part of India. It is that of the minister of state. His dwelling is little better than a shed: the walls are naked, and the mud-floor for the sake of coolness, is every morning sprinkled with a mixture of water and cow-dung. He has no furniture in it. He distributes food to whoever wants it; but he gives no grand dinners to his friends. He throws aside his upper garment, and, with nothing but a cloth round his loins, he sits down half-naked, and eats his meal alone, upon the bare earth, and under the open sky." The admiration implied in this account is clear from the mentioning that the Indian distributes food to "whoever wants it." Nor is his hospitality prompted by vanity to give "grand dinners to friends." The "European oppression" reducing the native to poverty is reflective of the contemporary feeling against the Indian Government finding expression in Cowper's "Task:"

> Is India free? and does she wear her plumed
> And jewell'd turban with a smile of peace,
> Or do we grind her still?

The sight of an old farmer ("gentleman" in Munro's language) in Kanara, wearing a *camly* sends Munro nearly into a trance: "One of the old gentlemen, observing that I had looked very attentive at his camly, was alarmed lest I should think he possessed numerous flocks of sheep;

. . . . I was looking at his camly with very different thoughts from those of raising his rents. I had not seen one since I left Mysore: it is the only dress of the most numerous and most industrious classes of husbandmen. They throw it carelessly over their head or shoulders or defend them from the sun; they cover themselves with it when it rains, and they wrap themselves up in it when they go to sleep. The rich man is only distinguished from the poor man by having his of a finer quality. It was in this simple dress that I had for many years been accustomed to see the farmers and goatherds in the Baramahl, and when I saw it again on the present occasion it was like meeting an old friend: it prepossessed me in favour of the owner; it brought to my remembrance the country I had left, and it filled me with melancholy, while I considered that I might never see either it or any of my former friends again."

The Charm of Running Water

An almost Wordsworthian love of nature was a sustaining influence on Munro. Though he left his Scottish home while yet in his teens he could recapitulate vividly each particular spot in Scotland. In a letter dated Dummul, November 1817, he writes to his wife: "The weather is so cool that I went out after breakfast, between ten and eleven, and strolled along the bank of a rocky nullah for an hour; often standing still for some minutes, looking at the water tumbling over the stones, and the green sod and bushes looking greener for a bright sun.

There is nothing I enjoy so much as the sight and the sound of water gushing and murmuring among rocks and stones. I fancy I could look on the stream for ever—it never tires me. I never see a brawling rivulet in any part of the world, without thinking of the one I first saw in my earliest years, and wishing myself beside it again. There seems to be a kind of sympathy among them all. They have all the same sound, and in India and Scotland they resemble each other more than any other part of the landscape." The fascination of running water was so great for Munro that he would forget everything else in its contemplation. He writes in a letter to his wife dated Rajamundry, the 6th September 1822: "The bungalow which I now occupy stands on the top of an old bastion, close to the edge of the river. The scene is magnificent. We see the Godaveri coming along from the Polaveram hills about twenty miles distant, and passing under our walls in a deep and rapid stream two miles broad. The mass of water is probably greater than that which flows in all the rivers in Britain together. Most of the party, as well as myself spend two or three hours every day in looking at it. I never get tired of it; but I wish it were a little nearer to Madras, for it is one of those fine sights which will very much derange all my calculations of seeing you." Munro was known to have loved gardens very much. As he is leaving Baramahl he writes as follows: "It is a romantic country, and every tree and mountain has some charm which attaches me to them. I began a few years ago to make a garden near Derampoory, sheltered on one side by a lofty range of

mountains, and on the other by an aged grove of mangoes. I made a tank in it about a hundred feet square, lined with stone steps; and the spring is so plentiful that, besides water abundantly for every herb and tree, there is always a depth of ten or twelve feet of clear water for bathing. I have numbers of young orange, mango, and other fruit-trees in a very thriving state. I had a great crop of grapes this year, and my pine-beds are full of fruit. When I happened to be at Derampoory I always spent at least an hour every day at this spot; and to quit it now goes as much to my heart as forsaking old friends."

It was not the quiet scene of beauty only which attracted Munro. A storm afforded perhaps greater enjoyment: "It began to thunder at two o'clock this afternoon, and about four it looked so threatening, that I went out to enjoy the coming storm. I mounted an old cavalier, the only remaining part of a mud fort, which once covered their village; the view was wild and magnificent; it was a vast assemblage of hills; for from the spot where I stood not a valley was visible, except the small one which I had come through in the morning; the dust of the fresh ploughed fields was everywhere flying up in whirlwinds, and the dark clouds were descending from the distant mountains upon the low woody hills near me. I continued admiring this above an hour, when I was driven from my station by the rain, which poured down in a torrent, and was followed by a tempest of hail, the second I have seen in this country. The stones were perfectly smooth and round, and about the size of small pistol-balls.

I swallowed a great number of them, to the memory of former days, while I was hastening to my tent to get dry clothes."

Kindred Souls

It was in no light-hearted manner that Munro conceived of friendship. If we are to take his own statement about his intimate friends very seriously they numbered only three or four, and by an irony of fate all of them died when Munro was yet young in the Indian service. James Irving died first, then Dods, about whom Munro leaves a touching reference for he had invited him to Dharmapuri, and the letter came back with the news that Dods had died. Dods had every year spent a few weeks with Munro, and now on his way to Arcot from Trichy, he was requested by Munro to stop at Dharmapuri: "Dods the oldest and dearest of them all, is now gone; he was my tent-mate in '80 at Conjeevaram, and from that time till the day of his death my affection for him grew stronger and stronger." Foulis was the third friend who died in May 1796. Both Dods and Foulis had the gift of putting their friends at ease in no time and giving them a hearty welcome. Taylor was a fourth who died at Amboyna in April 1796. The death of his early and intimate friends induces Munro to define afresh the requisites of true friendship: "To make friendships cordial and unreserved, men must not only have something of the same tempers, inclinations, and ways of thinking, but they must have passed many of their earlier years together, in the same scenes of pleasure or

distress." Munro is nearly giving away what he had said in another letter, that companionship and common tastes are not essential to friendship.

As an unselfish and generous bachelor, Munro must have had a natural capacity for deep friendships. To quote Gleig's words: "His manners were reserved and he spoke but little in society. . . With two or three friends to whom he felt that he could unbosom himself, he was one of the most agreeable of men." A man is known by his friends, according to the old saying. The purity, unselfishness, and generosity of Munro may be reasonably looked for in his friends.

The six months which Munro spent at Madras were too short a time for forming friendships. Yet we notice a Dr Koenig who gratified the youthful Munro with discussions on scientific subjects. The discerning naturalist knew at once the worth of Munro and offered him whole-hearted hospitality by inviting him to live with himself. Munro however refused to be under such deep obligation to him. In the postscript of a letter dated 30th March 1780 Munro writes to his father: "Dr Koenig has taken a house about six miles from this; he says, if I will come to stay with him, I shall have two rooms and a palankeen always ready to carry me wherever I desire to go. I have declined accepting his offer, for some reasons which I have mentioned and likewise because I don't choose to be obliged to any body for a thing of this kind whilst I can live upon my pay." Munro had apparently brought an introduction with him to the "eccentric merchant" Ross at Madras, and when Dr Koenig lived

with Ross, Munro was attracted to visit them often. "After Dr Koenig came to live with Mr. Ross I spent the greatest part of my time at his house, amusing myself with shells and flowers, but before that I employed it differently." We learn from Love's Vestiges of Old Madras that Dr Johann Gernhardt Koenig applied in 1778 to the Madras Government for appointment as the Company's Natural Historian. He had been employed by the Danish king in Indian research, but had left Tranquebar through want of encouragement. The Madras Government gave him an appointment on 40 pagodas a month. Munro met him after his return from a voyage to Malacca, when he claimed to have made discoveries in botany and in regard to tin ore. Munro writes in his letter: "I suppose Ross told him what a learned man I was, for I had not seen him above once or twice when he began to talk with me of Chemistry: he carried me to see his collection, I was with him almost every day, till one day he told me he would take it as a favour if I would examine an English translation that he had made of the Latin descriptions of some of his plants; I altered most of the spelling, and in many places the arrangement of the words." Even as a young man Munro could pass judgment with great confidence, for he concludes his account of Dr Koenig's researches with the words: "after all, I don't think there is anything in these important discoveries that was not before known in Europe."

First among Munro's friends should come Captain (later Colonel) Alexander Read. Munro was first associated with him in August 1788 as his assistant

in the Intelligence Department, and later Read was Munro's chief in the Baramahls. Like Munro, Read was a friend of the ryot. Part of the credit for the genesis and growth of the ryotwari system goes to Read, though Munro who took it up a little later became its greater exponent. When addressing his protest to Read in behalf of the Salem weavers Munro writes on the 11th October 1793 : "You have given all your attention to the rayets and abandoned the weavers to a set of rascally dubashes." Like Munro, Read cherishes a real sense of fairness as between Europeans and Indians, and he rightly refuses interference in matters of spiritual jurisdiction when the Abbe Dubois complains, that Black Priests have come from the Malabar coast and lodged in his churches and asked him as an usurper to clear out of the country. The Abbe confesses that "above all their likeness by colour, manners and morals, with the people of this country, have won them the affection and confidence of all; and they are received and triumphing in all my churches, while despised of all, I am obliged to fly from a cottage to another, and I hardly meet with persons compassionate enough to give me shelter in their thatched houses."

From the beginning Munro had a genuine admiration for Read. In an early letter from Baramahl where he joined in 1793 he writes to his brother James whom he has recommended for an appointment under Captain Read: "You will be under an intimate friend of mine; and what is better, a most excellent man—Captain Alexander Read." In a letter of the 14th April 1793 to his father, Munro

is anxious to state that Read was not the man to make money by corrupt practices: "I observe the Glasgow politicians have given a large fortune to Captain Read and some *pickings* to me. Read is no ordinary character: he might in Mysore have amassed as much money as he chose, and by fair means too; but he was so far from taking advantage of his situation for this purpose, that he even gave up his bazaar and many other perquisites of his military command, and received nothing but his prize money and commission, which altogether, I believe, amounted to about six thousand pounds. Whatever I might have done had I been left to myself, I could get no pickings under such a master, whose conduct is invariably regulated by private honour and public interest. These, and an unwearied zeal in whatever he undertakes, constitute the great features of his character. The enthusiasm in the pursuit of national objects, which seizes other men by fits and starts, is in him constant and uniform. These qualities, joined to an intimate knowledge of the language and manners of the people, and a happy talent for the investigation of everything connected with revenue, eminently qualify him for the situation he now fills with so much credit to himself and benefit to the public." Munro is here unconsciously pronouncing an encomium which suits himself exactly. We praise in others what we wish to be ourselves.

Read retired from the service in 1799 and was enjoying rest in Europe. Munro writes several letters to give Read news of his "friends" in India, of Graham and Macleod, and of Lakshman Row,

and Narnapah. He draws a fanciful picture of the freshness of health which Read should gain in Europe so as to give him an unrecognisable appearance, and contrasts it with his own sunburnt countenance. Munro writes to Read on the 28th September 1802: "If I do not find my bones too stiff I shall probably go home overland, and when I reach the confines of Europe, I shall begin to look out sharp for you in every fashionable hotel; so if you see me I hope you will make yourself known for it is very likely that with your English costume and blooming cheek I shall not recognise you. My meagre, yellow, land-wind visage will readily tell who I am." In a later letter, of the sixth March 1804, Munro writes: "I have lately had a letter from your old friend, Narnapah telling me that you have sent him a magnificent present of silver atterdans, kullumdans, etc., and that he is praying shuburore for the return of Huzzoret."

Two other friends worth mentioning are Major Macleod and Captain Graham. These were his colleagues in the Baramahls under Read. Munro has told us that if he wanted to indulge in a freakish pastime which he would be ashamed to expose before the people he administered, he would run away to Macleod's or Graham's division for the purpose. These men met together frequently, it may be four or five times in the year, and gave themselves to mirth on such occasions, as only bachelors can. Many a time they had sworn against marriage, Graham outswearing Munro and yet marrying earlier than he. He married Miss Johnson, daughter of a former Councillor, who is said to have been

accomplished. Marriage absorbed Graham so completely that for some months he seemed to forget his friends who did not hear from him. After six months Munro heard from him and chaffed him, and at the same time advised him to guide his young wife in the way of good reading. Poor Graham lost his collectorship of Arcot about the time of the marriage, it is said, through his trusting the Sheristadar Lakshman Row too much. But Munro was too much attached to Graham to leave him alone. He recommended him to General Wellesley whom Graham followed, and when Ahmadabad came into British control the collectorship of the place was bestowed on Graham. Major Macleod who became collector of Kanara resigned his post to the surprise and annoyance of those who appointed him to it. He was later appointed collector of Arcot to relieve Graham's successor. But he did not have smooth sailing there. Like Graham he was accused of making too low assessments and in a little more than a year he resigned his place alleging ill-health.

Two more names should be included here, Corner and Cuppage. Munro refers to these in his letter to Read, already quoted from, of the 28th September 1802: "You will no doubt too fall in with Corner and Cuppage, who have also got their topsails loose. Corner, I suppose, you will find in the upper gallery at Drury Lane, calling out for music, and Cuppage in a chop-house." That Munro had a great esteem for Cuppage is to be inferred from his letters. He writes to his brother James: "You ought to get up in the morning, and take exercise, and mix with the people of the garrison, to whom

you have already, I suppose, received an addition, by the arrival of Cuppage. You will find him an excellent man in every respect, both as a commanding officer and a companion." We read in another letter of Munro's: "I have had no holidays since I left Seringapatam in 1799. I have had but two idle days; one that I rode over to Sidout, and another that I went forty miles to see Cuppage in Nundidoorg." The Salem Gazetteer mentions Lieutenant Corner's achievement in the capture of Anchetti-Durgam on July 18, 1791. Cuppage occurs in the following sentence relating to the last Mysore War: "Hostilities began on the 5th, when a detachment under Major John Cuppage occupied without resistance the small hill forts of Nilagiri and Anchetti-Durgam."

Great names like the Duke of Wellington, Sir John Malcolm, and Mountstuart Elphinstone were also among Munro's friends, but they cannot be included here lest we do injury to Munro's conception of friendship. To the Duke himself Munro writes on one occasion: "The few young men who have brought me letters from your Grace, have, I fear, derived little benefit from my acquaintance. I have however done what I believe you would have done yourself. I have requested the officers under whom they were placed to look after them, and make them learn their duty." When Mr Kirkman Finlay recommends a Dr Anderson to Munro, he turns the matter into a playful metaphor of free trade getting into peril by the special favouring of persons: "I do not know that I have ever acknowledged the receipt of your letter about Dr An-

derson. I have never seen him, but I understand that he is a very good public servant; which, being our townsman, I consider as a matter of course. I hope that you are a true friend to free trade of public servants, as well as for other articles; and that you do not think that men ought to have a monopoly of offices because they come from a particular town; or that we should call them China, when we know they came from the Delft-house."

Tragic and Lonely

We have so far tried to comprehend both the handicaps and the glories that affected the personal fame of Munro, but we are still to visualise the real Munro with the help of creative imagination. With all the wealth of material at his disposal Gleig failed to do this. In condensing Gleig for the Rulers of India Series Mr Bradshaw has not troubled himself to bring out a personal portrait, probably because it was foreign to the scope of the Series for which he wrote his book. Between Gleig who brought out his single volume edition in 1849 and Mr Bradshaw who prepared his book in 1893, there was a first rate English writer who knew the hidden worth of Gleig's biography and embellished his great novel "The Newcomes" with diamonds polished from the mine of Gleig, in the year 1853. The present writer can claim credit for having been the first to point out that Colonel Newcome in Thackeray's novel is based more substantially on Sir Thomas Munro than on any of the numerous names suggested previously by English

critics. The proof for this identification is an argument running over a dozen pages of the Cornhill Magazine for December 1927, and cannot obviously be reproduced here. It is however not meant to state that Colonel Newcome is exactly Sir Thomas Munro. Thackeray pursued a perverse method of 'copying'—though certainly it was 'copying'—the analysis of which helps us to understand somewhat the cynical quality of his art. The total impression of Thackeray's imaginary character, Colonel Newcome, bears a remarkable resemblance to Munro as we may construct him from Gleig's pages. Like Munro, Newcome was a lonely pathetic figure. Following a hardy rule of life, Munro attained nearly the highest place in the Company's service. He had the offer of the Governor-Generalship also, but he rejected it, and his premature death prevented anyhow the possibility of that promotion.

Coming out in his nineteenth year, Munro returned home for a holiday only after a stay of twenty-eight years in India. During all these years he remained single, resisting every temptation to enter on marriage, his interest in life having been upheld by devotion to his parents and a vague yearning for the mother country. The visit home proved actually a dismal story. Two of his brothers had died in the interval and his mother also just a year before his leaving India, and his father had sunk into insensible senility. In a short time Munro himself got tired of Scotland and turned to London, where also he felt like an alien in the new world which had grown during his absence in India. This feeling of being a misfit in his own country was a

theme of intense bitterness to him even in distant prospect. Writing to his sister as early as about 1793, and remarking on the great change in her appearance as seen in a portrait of hers sent to him, Munro states: "The consolation to be derived from all this is, that we cannot meet after a separation of twenty years exactly as we parted. I have not been idle in that time, as you shall see when I return to expose my sun-dried beauty." Earlier, in January 1793, Munro writes: "After spending a great part of my life in India, I should not easily reconcile myself to sitting down quietly in a corner with people among whom, as I should begin acquaintance so late, I should perhaps always remain a stranger." Just before he sailed home in 1807 he expressed his apprehensions about what he would feel like when reaching home, in a letter dated Anantpoor, 5th August 1807: "But what I am chiefly anxious about is, what I am to do when I go home . . . . and as I am a stranger to the generous natives of your isle, I should be excluded from every other line as well as military, and should have nothing to do but to lie down in a field like the farmer's boy, and look at the lark sailing through the clouds."

Dismal as the long exile of twenty-eight years in India concluded by a disappointing holiday at home proved to be, a yet more melancholy chapter was in store for Munro after marriage. Official duties separated him from his wife who remained sometime in Bangalore. When they both proceeded to Madras and went home for a holiday, a son was born on board the ship during the voyage. When only

a few months old the son was left behind, and the parents returned to India. Munro had become Governor of Madras now and years of rest and happiness seemed to await him. A second son was born and Lady Munro and the child both fell ill, necessitating their immediate departure for Europe which took place in March 1826. Gleig presents us just five letters written by Munro to his wife, after her departure from Madras. These are of melancholy interest because we have in them the presentiment of death while all the time Munro pours forth his pining to rejoin his wife and children. In a letter of May 17, 1826, he writes: "You forget that it is above forty-six years since I arrived in India, and that I have always been in laborious situations. I ought, according to all ordinary rules, to have been dead seven years ago; and nothing but a very strong constitution and great temperance have saved me. My constitution may be expected to break every day; for I fancy that I already see some symptoms. My hand shakes in writing, especially in a warm land-wind day like the present, which it did not do till lately; and I lost from a cold last year, more than one half of my bad hearing." In the same letter, he writes of diminished powers: "I never wish to remain in office when I feel that I cannot do justice to it; and I know that I could once have done as much in three or four days as I can do now in a week."

In the fourth year of his Governorship Munro applied to be relieved. He wrote on 18th September 1824: "In September last, I sent an application to the Court of Directors to be relieved. I had

been quite long enough in India; and as everything was quiet and settling into good order, I thought it a proper time for leaving it." The occurrence of a famine and the Burmese War, however, obliged him to continue in office, and when the war was over, in May 1826, Munro despatched an application for leave, desiring to be relieved of his duties so that he might rejoin his family. To make sure of his application reaching the authorities in England, he despatched, we learn, six copies of the letter by different ships. Fate however decided very differently from Munro's intentions. The Board of Directors took their own time to appoint a substitute, and meanwhile Munro continued to fulfil his gubernatorial duties. Towards the end of May 1827 Munro set out to pay a visit to the Ceded Districts to see his "old friends." To the importunity of his friends who pointed out that cholera raged in these regions, Munro opposed a blind confidence that he would not be touched by the infection. But catching it, and without recovering from it, Munro died on the 6th July 1827. He died as he lived. The unselfish and generous spirit of the man is exhibited even in his deathbed. To the first enquirer he answered: "I am not very unwell, but I have no doubt I have caught the disease." He was not nervous about the illness, because he had had the same illness before, but he was sorry for the trouble he caused others. He did not want them to run a risk by remaining in his chamber, and so begged them to leave it. The solicitude of others touched him and he remarked that it was worth while being ill, in order to be so kindly

nursed. Again he asked the others to withdraw from the tent so as not to risk infection. In the last words, he remarked on his sinking voice and improved hearing.

The circumstances of this death must appear intensely tragic. As Gleig points out, the Court of Directors received his application for leave on the 6th September 1826, and Lushington who was to succeed Munro did not receive his formal order of appointment till the 6th of April 1827, and further delay was caused by Lushington taking his own time to leave England, after settling his personal affairs, and he left England only in July. Computing the voyage between England and India at four months, Munro could have been absolutely prevented from starting on his fatal tour in the Ceded Districts, if only Lushington had left England in January of the year. The circumstances of Munro's death bear a terrible analogy to those of Gordon's death at Khartoum. The failure of Gladstone's government to send relief to Khartoum is like that of the Directors of the East India Company not sending in reasonably early time a successor to Munro. We thus see Munro's lonely and melancholy figure invested in his death by one more tragic circumstance which crowned all the others in his life. A simple-hearted man who had fervent longings of one kind or another throughout his life, for fulfilling which he underwent incredible sacrifice, his heart was stilled before they could be fulfilled. The son whom he left behind when he sailed to India at the end of 1819 he was destined never more to see during his life, though he lived

for seven years later. On the eve of his departure from England Munro writes to his sister: "I hope you will visit Craigie sometimes, and see that my son is not spoiled, but brought up hardily, as we were in Glasgow." Any letter from England which referred to the child was dear to Munro. He writes from Rajahmundry on September 6, 1822, to his wife: "I enclose Mrs Erskine's letter, because it mentions our boy." On the 29th June, 1826, he writes to his wife: "I shall keep a letter from Tom to you, as it is on the same sheet with one from him to me, both in his own handwriting. He is the only one of the family whom I now see. I go into the room where his picture is every day for two minutes, on my way to the dining room, or rather verandah . . . . ."

An eagerness to acquire literary learning and to tour the European countries was a common quality of Munro and Colonel Newcome. The latter says: "One of the great pleasures and delights which I had proposed to myself on coming home was to be allowed to have the honour of meeting with men of learning and genius, with wits, poets, and historians, if I may be so fortunate; and of benefiting by their conversation." That Munro acquired a new polish by literary acquaintance late in life is evidenced by the following note recorded by Elphinstone in 1820: "Sir Thomas and Lady Munro went off. I am more than ever delighted with him; besides all his old sound sense and dignity, all his old good humour, simplicity and philanthropy, Sir Thomas now discovered an acquaintance with literature, a taste and relish for poetry, and an ardent

and romantic turn of mind, which counteracted the effect of his age and sternness, and gave the highest possible finish to his character."

A deep unfulfilled longing with which Munro died was the desire to visit the European countries. Even after becoming Governor of Madras, he writes in November 1821: "No wish has ever with me been so strong and constant as that of visiting Italy and Greece: and were I twenty years younger, I should certainly spend seven of them there. But this last boyish expedition to India has, I fear, been fatal to all my rational plans of travelling in Europe . . . . . ." Even as he was sailing out to India in June 1814, Munro regarded the prospect as dull and uninteresting, even though he was appointed to an important post: "I had more pleasure from my excursion of a few days to Paris, than I shall derive from a residence of two or three years in India."

The great moral which Thackeray meant to elaborate in creating his Colonel Newcome is expressed in the sentence: "What a strange pathos seems to me to accompany all our Indian story!" No greater figure illustrates this pathos so well than Sir Thomas Munro. He was a sacrifice offered by Britain, on which the gods looked with favour, for the prosperity of her empire in India.

PART II

THE LETTERS OF SIR THOMAS MUNRO

LETTER 1

To His Father

Madras, 6th February, 1780

Dear Sir,

We sailed from the Cape on the 4th of November. We had a strong gale on the 25th, which gave us an opportunity of escaping from the fleet; had we arrived in Madras a fortnight before the other ships, as the Captain expected, it would have been very lucky for the Cadets on board, as we might have been appointed and sent up the country before the rest arrived. But when we arrived on the 17th of January, we found that the Superbe and Eagle had been there six days before us, and the next day the whole fleet arrived.

Most of the Cadets that have come out this year are for the Madras Establishment; the greatest part of them are Scotsmen, all particularly recommended to the care of the General. You cannot conceive what a number of relations he has got—nephews, cousin-germans, etc.

There are eighty-three Cadets for this Establishment and very few for Bengal, all of whom Captain H. says will have commissions the moment they arrive. I believe it would have been better if I had

been for the Bengal Establishment, as I would have been sure of a commission even though I had no letters. George Smith and John Lennox went home, and George Macpherson died before I came here; all the rest of the people to whom I had letters, except Mr Haliburton, were gone up the country.

As soon as I came ashore, I waited upon Mr Haliburton; he is a very plain man, and the most entertaining that ever I was in company with; he gave me a general invitation to his house. A few days after, he carried me in his phaeton to the General's; he asked me many questions upon the road, and told me if I wanted any money, to let him know. I mentioned my deafness to him; 'I know that,' says he; you must be as near the General as you can, and mind you be on his right hand (he is not a ceremonious man); for he will be surprised if he asks you a question, and you don't make any answer.' The General told me he would do everything for me that lay in his power; then turning to Mr Haliburton: 'You know,' says he, 'there are such a number of Cadets this season, that all that I can do for Mr Munro is to send him up the country.'

Cadets here are allowed either five pagodas per month and free quarters, or ten pagodas and find their own lodging; all the Cadets follow the first way. Of the five pagodas, I pay two to a Dubash, one to the servants of the mess, and one for hair-dressing and washing, so that I have one pagoda per month to feed and clothe me.

Hyder Ally has stopped two expresses coming overland; there have been some skirmishes, and a good many officers killed up the country. I hope

he will soon begin to act more effectually. Jack Brown is a Lieutenant. I expect to hear from you soon. I have not heard anything of Daniel this long time. Has Alexander gone to sea? If he has, he'll repent it. I will write to him and D. by the first opportunity, and tell him my reasons against going to sea.

THOMAS MUNRO.

LETTER 2

To His Mother

Dear Madam,

When the ship anchored in the Roads, a number of the natives came on board. They were dressed in long white gowns. One of them, a grave, decent-looking man, came up to me; he held a bundle of papers in his hand which he begged I would read; they were certificates from different people of his fidelity and industry. He said that strangers on their arrival in India were often at a loss for many necessary articles, but that I need give myself no trouble, for if I would only give him money, he would purchase for me whatever I wanted; he would attend me as a servant, and would be content with such wages as I should think upon trial he deserved. I congratulated myself on having met with so respectable a person in the character of a servant. He said he would go on shore and get me another, for that no gentleman could do without two, and that he would at the same time carry my dirty linen to be washed. I had only a few changes clean; I gave him the rest.

Two days after, when I went on shore, I found my old man standing on the beach with half a dozen of porters to carry my baggage to Captain Henderson's house. I went early to sleep, quite happy at being rid of my old shipmates the soldiers.

My servant entered the room while I was dressing next morning. He surveyed me, and then my bed, with amazement. The sea-chest, which occupied one half of the chamber, was open: he looked into it and shook his head. I asked the cause of his wonder. 'Oh, sir, this will never do; nobody in this country wears buff waistcoats and breeches, or thread stockings, nor sleeps upon mattresses; sheets and blankets are useless in this warm climate: you must get a table and chairs, and a new bed.'

I was vexed to learn that all the clothes, of which I had taken so much care in the passage from Europe, were now to be of no service.

He inspected the contents of the chest. The whole was condemned, together with the bed-clothes, as unserviceable, except three or four changes of linen which were to serve me till a tailor should fit me out in a proper manner.

'It is customary with gentlemen,' said the old man, to make a present of all their European articles to their servants, but I will endeavour to dispose of yours to advantage: four guineas will buy a table and chairs, and cloth for the tailor, and as Captain Henderson is gone to Bengal, you must get a couch of your own; it will not cost above two guineas.' He went out with the six guineas, leaving me with an empty chest, and my head full of new cuts of sleeves and skirts, which the tailor was to make in

a few days. But all my schemes were disconcerted by some unfortunate accident befalling my good friend with the credentials, for he never returned.

This unexpected blow prevented me from stirring out above twice or thrice in a week for several months after. On these days I sallied forth in a clean suit, and visited all my friends. After Dr Koenig came to live with Mr Ross, I spent the greatest part of my time at his house, amusing myself with shells and flowers; but before that I employed it differently.

I rosè early in the morning to review my clothes; after having determined whether shirt No. 3 or 4 was best, I worked at my needle till breakfast. When it was over I examined the cook's accounts, and gave orders about dinner; I generally read the rest of the day till the evening, when I mounted to the top of the house to observe the stars I had been reading of during the day in Ferguson's Astronomy. When I had finished this book, I diverted myself in a different manner in my evening walks. After considering the matter for several nights, I at last resolved that my country-house should be near Lochlomond, and that Erskine should be my housekeeper. I rose early in the morning to work in the garden, or if I was lazy, I read Justice, and gave the gardener directions. I then sent five or six messages for my sister to come down and make breakfast. After making an apology for disturbing her repose, I went to fish in the Loch, or in the stream that winded through my garden and woods, or to read a book under a tree in some retired walk.

But when I was called down to supper, I did not see anything of the plenty of my country-house.

With all my economy, it was near six months before I could save money enough to buy me a few suits of linen. I did not choose then to ask any of Mr R., and Mr H. did not seem disposed to give me any assistance till I should leave Madras; but Mr R. wishing to get me appointed to join the detachment under Colonel Baillie, I continued in Madras, making application for this purpose, till Hyder entered the Carnatic, when I joined the army in the field.

LETTER 3

To His Sister

Camp before Cuddalore, 17th July, 1783

You must not think me forgetful if I do not write to you so often as to my father and mother, since I consider it of little consequence to which of you my letters are addressed; if they reach home, they are considered as family epistles.

You cannot conceive what labour I go through a little before the departure of the Europe ships. I have half a dozen long letters to write, which employ me three or four nights. I often wish, before I have half done, that some quicker method could be invented of conveying our thoughts. This would be of greater use to you than to me, if your correspondence is now as extensive as it formerly was. I have heard it frequently observed, that most men, by a few years' absence from their native country,

become estranged from their old acquaintances, and look back with indifference on the scenes of their earlier years. I have never yet been able to divest myself of my partiality for home; nor can I now reflect without regret on the careless, indolent life I led in my father's house, when time fled away undisturbed by those anxious thoughts which possess every one who seeks earnestly for advancement in the world. I often see my father busied with his tulip beds, and my mother with her myrtle pots; I see you drawing, and James lost in meditation: and all these things seem as much present to me as they did when I was amongst you. Sometimes, when I walk on the sea-shore, I look across the waves, and please myself with fancying that I see a distant continent amongst the clouds, where I imagine you all to be. John Napier Greenhill is the only person here with whom I can talk of these things: he is so great an admirer of yours, that he one day solemnly declared to me, that he did not think you inferior in vivacity to his sister Anne. When I told him that he must not think me so credulous as to regard this flight as his real opinion, he assumed a grave countenance, and protested that he never was more serious in his life. This is farther confirmed by a letter I had some time ago from John Brown, informing me that his amiable correspondent, Erskine, had written him by the last ships a lively letter: his opinion goes farther with me than John Napier's, which I have never placed any confidence in since he one day told me that he had beaten my mother at backgammon, and that, had he not been afraid, he could have beaten my father

also. A man, after such assertions as these, will say anything.

LETTER 4

To His Sister

Kisnagerry, 23rd January, 1793

Daniel, after all his disappointments, is, I believe, in a fair way of doing well; he is engaged in the indigo business, which has lately become of great consequence in Bengal, and is still rapidly increasing: and I imagine he attends closely to it; for Alexander says nothing of his having made excursions for several months. If he can only, in the course of a year or two, get clear of debt, and make a little money of his own, there can be no danger afterwards; for it is probable that success will give him a confidence which will not be shaken by any trifling losses he may in future experience. Alexander says, however, that he is the most desponding of mortals, and that he is always foreseeing calamities that never happen. This is quite different from me; for, though I have been half-starved for these dozen years, I have never ceased to look, with great confidence, for some signal piece of good fortune; and though I have, to be sure, been mistaken, this has had no other effect than that of making me more sanguine; for I don't reason as philosophers do, from analogy, and other such matters. I don't say, bad luck today, and worse tomorrow; but rather, that bad luck, like other things, must have an end, —that mine having already lasted so long, is a strong

argument that I cannot have much more of it; and that I may, therefore, like Quixote, very reasonably suppose myself to be on the point of achieving some rare adventures. And should I go on for another dozen years in the same way as the last, my confidence will hardly be diminished. Were it possible that I could, by any supernatural means, be informed that I should never be independent in my fortune, it would not, I believe, sit very heavy on my mind; for I have considered very seriously the consequences likely to follow my acquiring what is called a moderate fortune, and I have doubted if I should be more happy with it than I am without it.

After spending a great part of my life in India, I should not easily reconcile myself to sitting down quietly in a corner with people among whom, as I should begin my acquaintance so late, I should perhaps always remain a stranger. Should the want of society tempt me to fall in love, and get a wife, such a change would, I fear, add little to my happiness. Would it not be a very comfortable matter, about the end of the century, to read in the Glasgow Courier—'Yesterday was married Lieutenant Munro, the oldest subaltern in the East India Company's service, to Miss—, one of the oldest maiden ladies of the place. The ceremony was performed by the Rev. Mr——, in the Ramshorn, and immediately after the couple,' etc.? I have no relish, I suspect, for what is called domestic felicity. I could not endure to go about gossiping, and paying formal visits with my wife, and then coming home and consulting about a change in our furniture, or

physicking some of the squalling children that Providence might bless us with. You will say—'You will be a more respectable character at home, settled with your family, than wandering about India like a vagabond.' But I cannot perceive that the one situation is more creditable than the other. Men in general go home, and stay in this country, for the same reason—to please themselves—not to raise their own or the national character: and the greater part of them go to their graves without having done either much good or much harm in this world. Why should I be eager to scrape together a little money, to go and linger through twenty or thirty dull years, in a family way among my relations and neighbours? In a place like Glasgow, I should be tired in all companies with disputes about the petty politics of the town, of which I know nothing, and anecdotes of families in whose concerns I am in no way interested. Among the merchants, I should be entertained with debates on sugar and tobacco, except when some one touched upon cotton, which would give me an opportunity of opening my mouth, and letting the company know that I had been in India, and seen one species growing on bushes, and another on trees taller than any that adorn the Green. After thus expending all my knowledge, I should not again venture to interrupt the conversation. Should I, after being tired of preserving silence among these gentlemen, saunter towards the College, for the purpose of having some discourse on general topics of literary taste, of which men in all professions may talk, and, in some measure, judge—here I should encounter the prejudices and

dissensions of small societies. If I spoke to Mr Richardson of Macbeth, he would probably start, and reply in a fine frenzy—'John Anderson hath murdered sleep!'—and send me home in amazement, like Hamlet, 'with each particular hair on end.' After making my escape from the professor of the 'rolling eye,' should I give up the men in despair, and hasten to some of my female acquaintances, to see if they talked anything nearer the level of common understanding, I should very likely find them in high argument on some abstruse point of the mitre and pine-apple schisms.

In a place filled with nothing but sectarians of some kind or other, I should search in vain for any rational entertainment; and, instead of congratulating myself on having been able to return and live in my native country, I should look back with regret to the society and the interesting wars of India. It is this circumstance,—the not perceiving any new sources of honour or happiness that could arise to me from the possession of money, that makes me indifferent about it, any farther than just to get enough to place me above want. My indifference, however, is only confined to a moderate fortune; it does not extend to a great one, for that would enable me to spend money without troubling myself much about accounts, and to live in any part of the world I should like best. I could have my town and country-house, where you might display your taste without beggaring me. We should look out for a spot with plenty of wood; rocks and water would be wanting to complete the landscape,—but these are easily found in Scotland.

After putting you in possession of these three great elements of natural beauty, I should expect that you should lay out the *policy,* and that you would manage your rocks, and woods and cascades, in such a way as to make me fancy myself in Arcadia, or the Candia of Mr Savary, or the fabulous Tinian of Anson; and if they were not to my taste, I should entreat James's poetical friend, Mr———, to celebrate both you and them in his unwieldy numbers. But we can talk more of this when some of my dreams are realised. James has, I believe, said everything you can wish to know of himself and me. I expect your chef-d'oeuvre, Margaret's picture, in a few days, from Madras.

Your affectionate brother.

LETTER 5

To His Sister

(Giving an account of the arrival of her miniature—The date is wanting)

You fell into the hands of James George Graham at Madras; James can tell you who he is; and he marched you off for the Baramahl without giving me any notice of your approach. I happened to call at Kisnagerry a few days after your arrival. There was a meeting of the officers to read some papers respecting the arrangements of the army, and you were introduced. I thought you were one of Graham's female cousins whom he had just returned from visiting, and I declared that it was highly

improper that the gravity of our deliberations should be interrupted by women. I had just seized you, to force you into your dark retreat, when the secret was discovererd. You may easily guess that I granted you a reprieve, and surveyed you with more inquiring eyes, and with very different feelings, but still I could find no traces of the countenance which I once so well knew. I could perceive no marks of age to account for this change; but time, without making you old, has worked such a total revolution either on your looks or my memory, that you are now a perfect stranger to me. I cannot think that the fault is mine, for in general I remember long and distinctly both what I read and what I see. It must be you who have thrown off your old face and disguised yourself with a new one. I suspect, however, that the painter has assisted, for there was a Lieutenant Noble, from Greenock present, who declares that he has often seen you and recollects you perfectly, yet he did not know your picture. The consolation to be derived from all this is, that we cannot meet after a separation of twenty years exactly as we parted. I have not been idle in that time, as you shall see when I return to expose my sun-dried beauty.

I have myself so vulgar a taste, that I see more beauty in a plain dress than in one tricked out with the most elegant pattern that ever fashionable painter feigned. This unhappy depravity of taste has been occasioned, perhaps, by my having been so long accustomed to view the Brahman women, who are in this country both the first in rank and in personal charms, almost always arrayed in

nothing but single pieces of dark blue cotton cloth, which they throw on with a decent art and a careless grace which in Europe, I am afraid, is only to be found in the drapery of antiques. The few solitary English ladies that I meet only serve to strengthen my prejudice. I met with one the other day all bedizened and huddled into a new habit, different from anything that I had ever seen before. On asking her what name it went by, she was surprised that I did not know the à la Grecque. It looked for all the world like a large petticoat thrown over her shoulders and drawn together close under her arms. I could not help smiling to think how Ganganelli, and the Abbè Winkelman, and the King of Naples, would have stared had they dug such a Greek as this out of Herculaneum. The fashions of the gentlemen are probably as fantastical as those of the ladies, though from having them continually before my eyes, the absurdity of them does not strike me so much. We have black and white hats, thunder and lightning coats, stockings of seven colours, and tamboured waistcoats bedaubed with flowers, and more tawdry finery than ever was exhibited on old tapestry. I have heard some military geniuses deplore very feelingly the neglect into which three-cocked hats had fallen. They have been accustomed when they were young to see some strutting warlike phantom or other with a hat of this kind, and they can never afterwards look upon it without being filled with ideas of slaughter and devastation. They think that in it consists half the discipline of armies and that the fate of the nations depends as much upon the cock of the hat

as of the musket. I see so many turbans and handkerchiefs every day, and so seldom any hats but round ones, that I have lost all taste for the sublime, and I think a three-cornered hat as absurd a piece of head-dress as a tiara. I wonder that the women, among all their changes of fashions, never thought of trying it. If I were sure that any one of the nine Muses had ever worn one, I would advise Mrs Grant to do the same, but I suspect she is like Professor M———, too much degenerated from her ancestors to try it. I think she had no right to accuse the long-descended Celtic bard of effeminacy, when she herself has forgotten the simplicity of her ancestors, and does not hesitate to drink tea and ride about the country in worsted stockings. I do not find that Malvina had a single pair, or even Agandecca, who lived farther north, and had a better excuse for such an indulgence. What these two ladies drank at the feast of shells, if they drank at all, I don't know. It might have been whiskey, but certainly was not tea. If the Muses must drink, as most poets tell us, it is perhaps as well that they should drink tea as anything else; but it is nowhere said that they must wear worsted stockings. This unhappy corruption of manners would be inexcusable in an ordinary woman, but poetry covers a multitude of sins, and Mrs Grant has a lyre which Ossian would have laid aside his harp to hear, and to which it is impossible to listen without forgetting all her offences against the customs of her forefathers, the bare-legged bards of other times. The Professor, though not born a poet, seems to have taken some trouble to make himself one; and if he

has, like most modern Sophs, been unsuccessful in conjuring up any sprite of his own, he has at least no common merit in having called forth the muse of Mrs Grant with

> Poetic transports of the maddening mind
> And winged words that waft the soul to heaven.

In her journal she has used the privilege, which superior geniuses often do, of writing carelessly. I lose much of the interest of the piece from not being acquainted with any of the characters she describes. Her ladies are all from the Grandison school—so full of smiles and gaiety, and wit and sense, and so charming and divine—that I am almost as happy as she is herself, when escaping from George's square, to get into the open fields, and follow her through Bedley's ancient Grove, "by Carron's streams or banks of Forth." There is so much of inspiration in her poetry, on seeing the Perthshire hills and Allan Water, that I am much out of humour at being forced away in such a hurry to drink port at the Inn: but she, however, makes ample amends at Killiekranky; and again, where we

> Hear young voices sounding on the mountain
> gale.

The whole is so animated, that it makes me more impatient than ever I was before to see the scenes which she describes. And were I not afraid of being taken for a Nassau, or some other foreigner, on all of whom Mrs G——— looks so indignant

from her misty mountains, I would mount the yellow horse and pay her a visit. She has the same faults that all modern poets have, and that you give us a specimen of in your Celestial Spark —she is continually running after the ancients. A man cannot look into an ode, or sonnet, or anything else, but he is instantly thrown over "Lethe Wharf," or plunged into Cocytus. The hills and the glens of the highlands are as wild as any of the old poetical regions: or, if they are too vulgar from being so well known, yet still we have other scenes of real nature—the wilds of America and Africa, the Andes with all their rushing streams, and the frozen seas in the polar regions, with all their dismal islands never trod by human foot—sublimer subjects of poetry than all the fictions of Greece and Rome. In Burns's best poems there is no mythology. I don't care how many Scandinavians we have, but I am almost sick of Jupiter and Neptune.

LETTER 6

To His Sister

Wamlere, 5th March 1795.

I find that all my arguments in favour of ignorance and old customs have been lost upon you, and that I might as well have attempted to put out the light of Mrs Mary Wolstonecraft, as to turn the heart of such a stubborn reformer as you have now become. All nations are now, it seems, to be one family; and we are to have no more quarrelling,

no more fighting, except intellectual combats; and every man of us is to cultivate philosophy and the arts, and to talk of nothing but urbanity, and humanity, and gentleness, and delicacy, and sympathy, and love—every desert spot is to be converted into a garden, and the whole face of the earth is to swarm with the sons and daughters of reason and liberty! What then? Suppose all these fine things realized, shall we have changed for the better? Let agriculture and manufactures be carried to their utmost possible extent, where does it all end, but in our being more effeminate in our dress and more Epicurean in our food than we are now? We must also admit that the increase of population has kept pace with the improvement of the arts; and that the whole face of the country will be covered with habitations, except what is required for the purposes of agriculture: but this cannot be a very extensive space; for, as the earth will then be forced to yield at least an hundredfold more than at present, I reckon an area of twenty feet square very ample allowance for each person. This is making a very great concession; for you know that every inch of the surface of dry land might be covered with houses, and the inhabitants, by having terraced roofs, might on the top of them raise food enough for their sustenance, as was formerly done by the Babylonians in their hanging gardens; but as I wish, contrary to the practice of the learned, to be moderate in argument, I give you twenty feet square for your maintenance and recreation. What will be the consequence of this advanced state of society? We shall, like the Chinese, throw our

newborn children into rivers, with as little remorse as if they were puppies. In towns where there is no river at hand, Edinburgh, for instance, the cry of "Gardyloo" will probably be followed by a babe, instead of the accompaniment which Queen Mary introduced from France. Ten stories will be more certain death to the young philosophers than a plunge into the river. We shall then hear of more "scapes by flood than by field," and, for want of romances and memoirs of revolutions, the adventures of these foundlings will form a principal part of our libraries. We shall not be able to walk out without being jostled on all sides by crowds of enlightened men and women. All the sports of the field, and all rural pleasures, will be at an end. There will be no rambling across the meadows, for every man will fence his territorial possessions of twenty feet against all intruders. There will be no hunting or shooting, for all wild animals will have been destroyed; and there will be no fishing because every living thing in the rivers will have been poisoned by manufactures. There will be no poetry, no silence, no solitude; and if by chance some genius should arise and invoke the Muse, he will sing more of being lulled to sleep by the clattering of fulling-mills and other machinery than by the whispering of the zephyrs, or the sweet south, upon a bank of violets. The hard-handed peasant will then wear dogskin gloves, silk stockings, and a solitaire, and be wrapped in silk from top to toe like a cocoon; and as the plough will then, by the power of machinery, go by itself, he will look at its motions, mounted on the horse, which, in these

barbarous times, would be employed in drawing it. And the rich man, dressed in the finest stuffs that art can produce, will sit in his marble palace gasping for fresh air; for amidst the steam of human bodies, and the smoke of engines and workshops, it will be impossible to get a mouthful unless by going to sea. When the world, by the progress of knowledge, shall come to this pass (if the art of war, after being lost for many ages, is again discovered), it will be hailed as a noble invention, and the author of it will perhaps receive the honours of the Pantheon, for giving elbow-room to the half-stifled inhabitants of the globe, by such ingenious machinery as fire-arms, instead of its being effected by pestilence and famine: it will no doubt be considered as a learned profession, and probably be classed as one of the branches of the medical art. Now, supposing that the economists have accomplished their great plan of filling the world with farmers and manufacturers, and made the whole face of the earth one great city, it does not appear that the more important end of increasing the happiness of mankind would be attained. But there is another kind of philosophers who propose doing this by other means. They do not mind what we eat or drink, or wear; their business is all with our minds—with our contemplations. They talk a great deal about the material and mental worlds, and of their both being subjected by man; and of the accumulating lights of a perpetual succession of speculative men, effecting in the one case what physical agents do in the other. I cannot conceive that that part of their studies which is directed to

the division of the powers of the mind into different heads of memory, reflection, etc., can ever make us wiser or better. It is only giving us a new code of metaphysical jargon, in addition to those which we have had already from the Indians, Greeks and Arabians, and which will also in its turn, be supplanted by something equally visionary and unimportant. Their disquisitions on government are not likely ever to do much good—for its best rules will always be drawn from experience; and whatever is good in their theories comes from the same source, though they often absurdly enough regard it as the offspring of their own genius. I never have much faith in the soundness of their political doctrines, and still less after what has passed in France. If they could ever discover and demonstrate mathematically the origin of ideas, or sentiments, or whatever they please to call them, they might still be very ignorant of the characters of men, and, of course, very unfit for the administration of public affairs. We have never yet had any proof that the knowledge of abstract sciences makes those who cultivate them either more able or more virtuous. I rather suspect they have a contrary tendency. Were a convention assembled of all the most celebrated writers in metaphysics and politics, for the purpose of framing a constitution for a country that wanted one, I should not hope for any great benefit from their labours, nor be surprised to behold the tyranny of Robespierre and his associates equalled by them. The mild benovelant moralist, who had been accustomed to fortify himself against the assaults of domestic calamities by

the maxims of philosophers, when brought into active scenes—when agitated and exasperated by the strife of parties, and when his latent ambition was awakened by the prospect of power, would find all his former aids of old saws of no avail, and might be hurried on to the commission of deeds as atrocious as ever were imagined by Marat himself. ——ventures to foretell that we shall advance with accelerated rapidity from one degree of improvement to another, till at last we shall be as good, and as wise, and as happy as angels. But could this prophecy be accomplished, it is not an event that ought to be wished for by Christians, because we should become attached to this vain world, and would have no motive for praying to go to a better; and pain and poverty, two apostles, who have perhaps made as many converts as all the bishops that ever existed, would be turned out of doors. But religion out of question—I am much afraid, that could the Doctor's schemes be brought to bear, they would not even contribute to our worldly bliss. The human race, as I told you before, is to be one great family. All malignant passions, and with them war, are to cease—all nations are to be alike enlightened. The gentlemen of Timbuctoo are to speak French, and the ladies to warble Italian; and the tranquil pleasures of mankind are never to be ruffled, unless by the death of their cattle, or the birth of their children. To such a state of dull uniform repose, give me, a thousand times in preference, the world as it now stands, with all its beautiful variety of knowledge and ignorance,—of languages—of manners—customs—religions and superstitions

—of cultivated fields and wide extended deserts—and of war and peace.

LETTER 7

To His Sister

October 4th 1795.

You begin, I imagine, by this time to suspect that by this long dissertation upon doctors, I am endeavouring to fight off replying to your outrageous attacks on military men; and I am not ashamed to confess that it is not far from the truth: for when I unthinkingly enough, last year, said something to you about war being almost as excellent an invention as sleep, it was only for want of something else to talk of, and I little dreamed that I should see you, in something less than seventeen years, decorating the horizon of controversy, and coming down upon me like another Mrs Mary Wolstonecraft, with a host of first principles, and physical and moral causes, and defying *me* to mortal combat, in which *you* propose to gather laurels. Then you talk of olives, and myrtles, and oaks, at such a rate that I began to doubt if I was not reading a letter from the famous Kensington Gardener, who renovates old fruit trees; and after dragging me into this wilderness, you talk of things invisible and divine, emanating and reascending sparks, and internal warfare, and you conclude this discourse on politics, morals, astronomy, and forest-trees, by praying that we may all at last become planets. This is all much too sublime for my poor spark of intelligence, particu-

larly as I have not got the metaphysical visual ray; I must, therefore, leave you, and return to earth again, and speak of things as we see them, and talk of men as we find them. I am still of opinion that war produces many good consequences: those philosophers who prophesy that the millennium is to follow universal civilization, must have shut their eyes on what is passing in the world, and trusted entirely to intellectual light, otherwise they would have seen that in proportion to the progress of science and the arts, war becomes more frequent and more general, and this I consider to be the true end of civilization. In former ages of barbarity and ignorance, two petty states might have fought till they were tired, without any of their neighbours minding them, and perhaps without those who were at a little distance ever hearing anything of the matter: but in these enlightened times of mail-coaches and packet boats, no hostility can be committed in one corner of Europe, but it is immediately known in the other, and we all think it necessary to fall to immediately. I should be glad to know in what uncivilized age a fray in Nootka Sound would have produced a bustle at Portsmouth. Barbarous nations, when at war, generally returned to their homes at the harvest season, and took the field again in the holidays, to fight by way of pastime, and they were not afraid to leave their towns with no other guard than their women, because no other nation was supposed to be concerned in their quarrel; but now, by the happy modern discovery of the balance of power, all Europe is fraternized—every nation takes at least as much interest in the affairs of other

nations as in its own, and no two can go to war without all the rest following their example. We are not like barbarians, contented with one or two campaigns; the riches of commerce and the improvement of science enable us to amuse ourselves much longer, and we are now seldom contented with less than seven. Why do our men of genius speculate, and our manufacturers toil unceasingly, but that we may collect money enough to treat ourselves now and then to a seven years' jubilee of warfare? The only instance in which civilized is less destructive than barbarous war is, in not eating our prisoners; but this I do not yet despair of seeing accomplished, for whenever any philosopher, or politician, shall demonstrate that eating prisoners will improve the cotton manufacture, or augment the revenue, an act of parliament will soon be passed for despatching them as fast as possible. War is to nations what municipal government is to particular cities, it is a grand police which teaches nations to respect each other, and humbles such as have become insolent by prosperity. If you are not satisfied with political arguments, I shall give you some of a higher nature. Do not all religious and orthodox books insist strongly on the manifold benefits resulting from the chastisement and visitations of stiff-necked and stubborn generations? Now what better visitation can you wish for, than forty or fifty thousand men going into a strange land and living there at free quarters for two or three years? Don't you think that the calamities of the American war have made us more virtuous than we were, and that more

Britons have gone to heaven since these chastisements, than did in all the preceding part of the century? And I, therefore, for my own sake, thank Providence, that such a visitation happened in my life. It is vain to look for the termination of war from the diffusion of light, as it is called. The Greeks and Romans in ancient times were, and the Germans, French, and English in modern times are, the most enlightened and warlike of nations; and the case will be the same till the end of the world, or till human nature ceases to be what it is. As long as nations have different governments, and manners, and languages, there will be war; and if commerce should ever so far extend its influence as that trading nations will no longer fight for territory, they will never refuse to take up arms for cloth—and then the age of chivalry having given place to that of economists, prisoners will no more be released on parole: the privates and subs will be employed in coal-heaving and other works serviceable to the state, and those of superior rank ransomed, and if they are dilatory in settling accounts, they will, perhaps, be tossed in blankets of a particular manufacture, to promote the circulation of cash. Those who rail against war have not taken a comprehensive view of the subject, nor considered that it mingles, in a greater or lesser degree, with the most refined of our pleasures. How insipid would poetry be without romances and heroic poems, and history without convulsions and revolutions! What would a library be with nothing but Shenstone and a few volumes of sermons? What would become of all those patriotic citizens who spend half

their lives in coffee-houses talking of the British Lion, if he were to be laid asleep by an unfortunate millennium ?

I am so far from wishing to abolish hereditary distinctions, that I think them useful when kept within proper bounds. I speak of them rather in a moral than a political view. Nobility of birth, if it does not always give elevation of sentiment, often prevents a man from descending to actions which he would hardly have started at had he been born in an inferior sphere ; the fear of disgracing his family keeps him above them ; but this is only a negative kind of merit. When, however, nobility is joined to an excellent natural disposition, cultivated by education, it gives the possessor a dignity of thinking and acting rarely found in the middling ranks of life ; of these there are many instances among the Spaniards. Alexander was in high spirits on the 8th August, the date of his last letter.

LETTER 8

To His Mother

Bellari, 17th May, 1795.

In the course of the last three months I have written to my father, Erskine, and Alexander. I should write to you all oftener, were I not so much out of the world that I hear very little of public affairs, and were my manner of life not so uniform that it is dull and uninteresting even to myself. I often wish that some of those dreamers who prate so much about the pleasures of retirement were in

my place; for to me life, without society, is a heavy task. I long for company, not merely for the sake of conversation, but also to amuse myself with being idle. For I would rather play fives or billiards, or make a party to go up a hill or to swim, than read the finest composition of human genius, or pass a classical night with the whole of the Royal Society in full college. I however still like reading, and the company of those whom I suppose to be either men of taste or knowledge, as much as ever; but without recreation of a lighter kind, I should soon lose all relish for both. Were I by chance thrown into a situation where it would be necessary to relinquish either sport or study, I should without hesitation give up study. It is impossible to express the strong passion which I still retain or which has rather continued to grow upon me, for fives, swimming, and every sport that I was fond of at school. I remember I left Cassimcottah, about eight years ago, on account of the danger of hill fevers: but a stronger reason was that I could not live without playing fives. Were I to go home to-morrow, instead of going about like a good citizen, and visiting the various improvements in the manufactures of my native town, one of my first excursions would be to Woodside, to swim down Jackson's mill-stream; and as this would certainly be represented as an action very indecorous in a person of my years, and as savouring of an empty mind, I would excuse myself by saying that I had only followed the advice of Lord Bacon: for as I knew the deepening and widening of canals to be matters of the utmost importance to a commercial nation, I had

resolved, in conformity to the principles of that philosopher, to admit nothing on hearsay, however high the authority, but to bring everything to the test of experiment; and that with this patriotic view, I had risked my person in a dangerous torrent.

Where I am now, I have no choice of study, or society, or amusement, I go from village to village, with my tent, settling the rents of the inhabitants; and this is so tedious and teasing a business, that it leaves room for nothing else,—for I have no hour in the day that I can call my own. At this moment, while I am writing, there are a dozen of people talking around me: it is now twelve o'clock, and they have been coming and going in parties ever since seven in the morning, when I began this letter. They have frequently interrupted me for an hour at a time. One man has a long story of a debt of thirty years' standing, contracted by his father; another tells me that his brother made away with his property when he was absent during the war; and a third tells me that he cannot afford to pay his usual rent, because his wife is dead, who used to do more work than his best bullock. I am obliged to listen to all these relations; and as every man has a knack at description, like Sancho, I think myself fortunate when I get through any one of them in half an hour. It is in vain that I sometimes recommend to them to begin at the end of the story. They persist in their own way of making me full master of all the particulars; and I must, after making my objections and hearing their replies, dictate answers in the same copious style to them all, so that I cannot be sure that this letter

will be ready to go by the next ships. I am now in the middle of a deep valley, about eight miles from the Cavery, and twenty south of Pinagur, surrounded on every side by woody hills, not covered with forest, but with trees of stunted growth, brushwood, and such a thicket of thorns as render them almost everywhere inaccessible: and as they are, like most of the hills in this country, composed either of one vast mass of bare granite, or of large stones and fragments heaped together, it is often impossible to scramble up, even where there are no other obstacles in the way. There is not a tree on the plain except here and there a tamarind in the inclosures behind a farmer's hut: but this scarcity is owing to neglect in not planting others in the room of those cut down, not to barrenness; for every inch where the plough could go is cultivated; and even many spots among the rocks are turned up by the hand. My tent is on the brink of a mountain stream, which winds through this dismal valley; for dismal it appears at present, because it is the beginning of the spring, and the whole plain is ploughed up, like a waste of red sand without a green thing. At the extremity rise the woody hills which bound it, and beyond them the lofty chain of mountains between Caveripuram and Seringapatam; but though only fifteen miles distant, the haze produced by the excessive heat is so great, that they are hardly visible; and yet in clear weather I have often seen them about eighty miles off. The great heats are almost over; for the land-winds, which moderate them greatly, are now begun. In a few days they will blow with great violence, and

will continue at the same rate, almost without intermission, till October. The months of June, July, and August, with the exception of a few clear days, will be cooler than in Britain: for during this time the sky will be almost continually overcast, and the sun often invisible for many days. When I speak of heat, I don't mean the thermometer, for it will in general keep between 80 and 85; but the effect produced on the human body, which from the constant high winds, frequently accompanied with drizzling rain, feels this degree of heat much less than you do one much lower at home. The middle of summer, on this account, however strange it may seem, is cooler than the middle of winter.

Mullegoord, 17th—I could get no farther with this letter yesterday. I came here this morning, about five miles to the north-west of the place I have just left. Yesterday was the hottest day we have had this year; but there is a great change since. It began to thunder at two o'clock this afternoon, and about four it looked so threatening, that I went out to enjoy the coming storm. I mounted an old high cavalier, the only remaining part of a mud fort, which once covered this village; the view was wild and magnificent; it was a vast assemblage of hills; for from the spot where I stood not a valley was visible, except the small one which I had come through in the morning; the dust of the fresh ploughed field was everywhere flying up in whirlwinds; and the dark clouds were descending from the distant mountains upon the low woody hills near me. I continued admiring this scene above an hour, when I was driven from my station by the rain, which

poured down in torrent, and was followed by a tempest of hail, the second I have seen in this country. The stones were perfectly smooth and round, and about the size of small pistolballs. I swallowed a great number of them to the memory of former days, while I was hastening to my tent to get dry clothes; but my reception there was not so comfortable as it would have been at home: for the convenience of being near a well, it had been fixed in the dry bed of a swamp, which was now almost knee-deep. After two hours' work in cutting trenches to carry off the water, and in throwing baskets of sand on the floor of the tent to make it firm, I have at last got a spot to bear my table and chair; and am at last after having weathered the storm, engaged in giving you an account of it. I have this moment had a visit from an old man, the accountant of the village: he was drawn here by curiosity, for he could not conceive what use I meant to make of the baskets of sand he saw passing; he told me there was an excellent clean hut in the village, proof against all rain. I answered, that after having been almost washed away, there was no occasion to go any farther in search of cleanliness. He said there would be a great deal more rain in the course of the night, and that I should certainly be drowned if I did not take his advice. This remark gave me an opportunity of showing my knowledge in natural philosophy: I informed him, that even if the rain should again demolish my floor, I would get into my couch and set it at defiance; for that in our elevated situation it could not possibly

reach me till every soul in the Carnatic was drowned; that I did not care how much water came down the hills, I should never be alarmed till I saw it coming up; when that happened, I should begin to have some serious thoughts of drowning. He is gone home fully convinced that I am drunk. He saw me drinking tea, which he supposed to be some strong spirits to counteract the cold.

Sholapaddi, 22nd May—I am now on the bank of the Cavery, about a mile below Caveripooram. The river is about four hundred yards broad here, and is beginning to fill. In a month more it will be even with its banks, which are about twenty feet high. You perhaps figure me to yourself in the middle of a rich country, walking on the side of a beautiful stream: but everything here is wild and savage; the valley, which is about two miles broad between the river and the hills, does not produce a blade of grass. During the wet weather, by the force of labour, it is covered with a poor kind of grain; but the rest of the year it is nothing but a heap of stones mixed with thorns; it is hardly possible to walk along the side of the river, as the ground is everywhere cut by prodigious deep ravines, full of bushes. I was above an hour yesterday in walking a mile, and half the time at least was spent in crossing them; because, after descending, I was often obliged to go a considerable way along the bottom before I could find a place to scramble up. In returning I attempted to come along the bed of the river; but this way was not pleasanter than the other way, wading through deep sand, or stumbling over blue rocks rising abruptly from it. The only agreeable

part of my journey was in sitting down upon one of them, and looking at the different kinds of water-fowl catching fish. While I rested here, the burning heat of the sun was rendered still more oppressive by the reflection from the sand and water; and I do not know whether the patience of the fishing-birds in watching for their prey, or mine in looking at them, was greatest. I once thought of varying the scene, and going home by water: this might have been the shortest way, and would certainly have been the coolest; but I felt some kind of repugnance to swimming among alligators; for though here as in many other parts of the country, they are not mischievous, and there is no instance of their ever having carried off any of the natives, who are perpetually bathing, I reflected that it would be no consolation to me to have it remarked by the old people of the village, that they never remembered to have seen any person taken down by them till this blessed day. I also recollected two or three instances of accidents having happened where these animals were said to be perfectly harmless; these arguments were quite sufficient to deter me from attempting the passage by water. I have not yet taken the trouble to ascertain whether my conduct on this occasion was the result of self-love, or of that wisdom which Dr Zimmerman, one of the most absurd coxcombs I ever met with, says is produced by seclusion from the world. If solitude is the mother of wisdom, it is to be hoped that, in a few years more, I shall be as wise as Solomon or Robinson Crusoe. There is another thing in favour of this idea,—the simplicity of my fare, which, accord-

ing to some philosophers, is a great friend to genius and digestion. I do not know if the case is altered by this diet being the effect of necessity, and not of choice. When my cook brings me a sheep, it is generally so lean that it is no easy matter to cut it. Fowls are still worse, unless fed with particular care, a science for which I have no turn; and as to river-fish, very few of them are eatable. If the fish and fowl were both boiled, it would puzzle any naturalist to tell the one from the other merely by the taste. Some sects of philosophers recommend nuts and apples, and other sorts of fruit; but nothing is to be found either in the woods or gardens here, except a few limes, and a coarse kind of plantain, which is never eaten without the help of cookery. I have dined today on porridge made of half-ground flour instead of oatmeal; and I shall most likely dine tomorrow on plaintain fritters. Some other philosophers think that gentle exercise, as a branch of temperance, has also a share in illuminating the understanding. I am very fond of riding in an evening shower after a hard day; but I do not rest much upon this; my great dependence, for the expansion of my genius, is upon the porridge.

LETTER 9

To His Brother ames, now in Scotland

Senkledroog, 25*th January*, 1796

I have received your letters of June and September, 1794, and May 1795. I cannot read your account of your ramble among our old haunts

without wishing myself along with you. I understand all the alterations you mention as well as if I saw them; but I have too much veneration for every thing about the place to relish any changes: I neither like the stone wall, nor the making the entrance from the hollow part of the road where the burn runs, instead of letting it go through the avenue as formerly. I hope the mill-lade is still full of mud; that the short road through the garden still remains; that the raspberries opposite to the dam still thrive for the benefit of wandering boys; and that no flood has carried away the large stone in the deep water opposite to the bathing-house, from which we used to plunge. Often have I sat upon it, and encouraged you in vain to come in. Alexander and William were not afraid of the water, and soon learned to swim; but I could never prevail on you to come above the dam; you always amused yourself among the stones in the shallow water below, where it was hardly deep enough for the winnows to play. This spot, next to our own family, if anything ever draws me home, will do it. I have no friendships nor employment that should induce me to return. I had no companions in the grammar-school with whom I associated after leaving it, except John Brown's sons and my brothers: and they are now dispersed in all parts of the world. By spending so much of my time in the house, I was more among Erskine's acquaintances than any of my own, and I would much rather see them than any of my school-fellows.

My attachment to India has been much weakened since you left it by the loss of many valuable

friends. You already know of James Irving; but Dods, the oldest and dearest of them all, is now gone; he was my tent-mate in 80 at Conjeveram, and from that time till the day of his death my affection for him grew stronger and stronger; he was carried off, in the course of a week, by a hill fever, which he caught at Gingee, where he had gone with another officer for the sake of solitary excursions, of which he was so fond, and of visiting the stupendous rocks and ruins about that place. No year ever passed that he did not contrive to spend several weeks with me. He was going to see some friends at Trichinopoly, and from thence had promised to come through the Baramahl on his way to Arnee. I wrote to him, that I had a tent ready for him; but my letter came back under a cover, informing me of his death. You fancy to yourself Foulis and he and I meeting at Derampoory: such a meeting I once flattered myself with seeing; but it is all over now, and the world has nothing which can ever give me so much pleasure as it would have done; but I am afraid I shall soon have to lament the loss of another friend. Foulis is so ill that there is hardly any chance of his recovery; if he dies, I shall have seen the end of almost the only three men with whom I have ever been intimate. Taylor is the only exception; and his constitution is so much impaired, that he will be obliged to go to Europe. I am now too old to form new friendships; and I foresee that I must go through life like a stranger among people, some of whom I esteem, but for none of whom I have any particular partiality. Daniel's marriage

inclines me to believe that I am still a young man; but when I see all my friends dropping off, I feel that I have survived all the pleasures of youth, and that I have only those of age to look to—the recollection of what is past. In all my letters, I have constantly approved of your plan of sacrificing every prospect to the recovery of health, and I hope you will preserve in this resolution; but I am afraid that your studies will be a great obstacle to success in this point, because they confine you too much, and give you too little exercise. I have often been attacked at Kisnagerry about your indolence, and have always defended you on the plea of bad health; and the state I saw you in would certainly have made any man listless, and incapable of exertion. I have often, for a simple headache, sat without moving or speaking for a whole day. Smith who came out in the ship with you, tells me that you were very lazy, and that you shammed illness, and spent all your time reading books in the jolly-boat with a Scotchman called Marshall: according to Smith's ideas reading books is a very idle kind of employment; and I am so far of his opinion, that I think it would have been better, had you in your earlier days spent less of time in school or college, and more with boys in the streets,—it might probably have saved you from the sickness, occasioned, I suppose, by too much confinement, which threw you into the hands of quacks. Daniel has settled fifty pounds a-year upon you. I shall remit you a like sum in a month or two, and, with the help of what Alexander can spare, I hope you will be able to manage till you

get into some kind of business; but you must keep up your spirits, and be cheerful, and full of exertion whenever health permits—there is no doing without these qualities. I have seen you, with all the dignity of a philosopher, speak contemptuously of the understandings, the pursuits, and engagements of your neighbours; but nothing is more unphilosophical, and what is of more consequence, more imprudent, than to show a slight to any person, however humble his capacity: there is hardly any man who ever forgives it: and true philosophy consists, not so much in despising the talents or wealth of other men, as in bearing our own fortune, whatever it may be, with an unaltered mind. I am preaching to you about an error that I often fall into myself, but never without repenting it.

LETTER 10

To His Father

Wamlere, 10th May, 1796.

The average rent of cultivated land in this country is not more than three shillings an acre. Waste lands pay nothing. The inhabitants graze their cattle and cut wood upon them, without being subject to any demand: laying down fields in clover, and different kinds of grass, is unknown in this country, where all the pasture is spontaneous. The average rent of the whole body of farmers is not more than ten pagodas each. I am pretty sure that there is not a man among them who is worth 500 l., and that, exclusive of their cattle, nine-tenths of

them have not five pounds. This extreme poverty is the principal cause of the lowness of their rents, and not any fault of the soil; for at least three-fourths of the lands in cultivation are capable of producing cotton, sugar, and indigo; but though the rayets have little money, I imagine that they suffer less real distress than the peasantry of Europe. The inclemency of the weather is what they hardly ever feel: firewood costs them nothing, and dress very little. Their own labour, for two or three days, is the price of their house, which is built of mud and covered with straw or leaves, and in a warm climate, such materials answer the purpose just as well as stone or marble. All of them are married, and their families, so far from being a burden, are a great support to them, because their labour produces more than the expense of their maintenance:—this is so generally understood, that nothing is more common than to grant a man a remission of rent on the death of his wife or his son. Learned men who write of India begin by talking of the sun, and then tell us that its vertical rays make the natives indolent; but, notwithstanding all this, the farmers are, at least, as industrious as those of Europe, and their women more so. They owe their poverty to their government, and neither to their idleness nor the sun. There is a great variety of castes among them; the degrees of industry are different in them all; and, in fixing rents, it is as necessary to attend to this circumstance as to the quality of the land. Brahmans may perform all the labours of agriculture, except that of holding the plough. On this account, and because their

women do not work in the fields, they seldom pay more than half the usual rent. It is fixed in the Carnatic at three-quarters; but this, I suspect, is always by a partial valuation among the rayets. The women of some castes go through every labour the same as the men; those of others cannot hold the plough; and those of others, again, are prohibited from every kind of work in the fields; but it is fortunate that the caste of which both the men and the women are the most industrious is by far the most numerous of all. In this caste the women manage everything, and the men hardly ever venture to disobey their orders. It is they who buy, and sell, and lend, and borrow; and, though the man comes to the cutcherry to have his rent settled, he always receives his instructions before leaving home. If he gives up any point of them, however trifling, he is sure to incur her resentment. She orders him to stay at home next day, and she sallies forth herself in great indignation, denouncing the whole tribe of revenue servants. On her arrival at the cutcherry she goes on for near an hour with a very animated speech, which she had probably begun some hours before, at the time of her leaving her own house,—the substance of it is, that they are a set of rascals for imposing upon her poor simple husband. She usually concludes with a string of interrogations. "Do you think that I can plough land without bullocks?—that I can make gold? or that I can raise it by selling this cloth?" She points, as she says this, to the dirty rag with which she is half covered, which she had put on for the occasion, and which no man would choose to touch

with the end of a stick. If she gets what she asks she goes away in a good humour; but if not, she delivers another philippic, not in a small female voice, but in that of a boatswain—for by long practice she is louder and hoarser than a man. As the cutcherry people only laugh at her, she carries her eloquence where she knows she can make it be attended to. She returns to her unfortunate husband and probably does not confine herself entirely to logical arguments. She is perhaps too full of cares and anxieties to sleep that night; and if any person passes her house about daybreak, or a little before, he will certainly find her busy spinning cotton. If I have not seen, I have at least often heard, the women spinning early in the morning when it was so dark that I could scarcely follow the road. It is the farmer's women who make most of the thread used in all the cotton manufactures of India.

LETTER 11

To His Sister

Derampoory, 7th February, 1798

Both your sprigs of ivy have reached their destination; for they have several times visited the Cavery in my writing-table, and will yet, I hope, see the bank from whence they came. Were I a man of a devout turn of mind, they might give rise to many serious and comfortable reflections on the world to come: even as it is, they warn me that I am not what I was—that I am as withered as they

—that I may return home, but that my youth and freshness will never return; and that I must sooner or later, be mingled with the autumnal leaves of Vallombrosa, or some other valley of death. They often remind me of old women and their religious books usually interspersed, for what reason I do not know, with dried leaves of roses and tulips in almost every age; and then I fancy myself again in the English chapel, turning over the prayer-book of Miss Yule (I think), the old lady who sat in the same pew with our mother, which besides a collection of withered leaves, contained many excellent pictures of prophets and angels. I fancy myself again listening to the drowsy doctrines of Mr——, and wishing myself in the Green, or anywhere but with him, while he was soaring beyond this visible diurnal sphere. But when I read your verses, I forget the ivy-mantled towers and kirks, and all the dismal countenances of the crowds of quick and dead that are poured out of them on a Sunday evening, and am transported to my old haunts at Northside. I cannot, however, recollect the old tree which supported your ivy-sprig. There was one pretty tall tree near Jackson's dam, at the sluice, and another higher up, near the hut, made of fir branches, for undressing; but I do not remember that either of them was encircled in ivy. The trees that attracted most of my attention were in the Glebe; an old oak (I believe), under which I made a seat, and two fir-trees, with large projecting branches, on which I have often sat and read voyages to the East Indies, much more pleasant then than I have found them since.

I know not whether it is nature or early habits that give us an attachment to particular ways of life, but I never passed any time so pleasantly as catching eels and minnows, unless perhaps, when I was too indolent to fish, and sat on a rock under Jackson's dam, with my feet dangling in the stream, and my eyes fixed on the water gliding among the stones. Many an idle, vacant, ruminating hour have I spent in this position, from which I was usually at length moved by some fell design against a shoal of minnows or against the long black insect which, in a sunny day, is continually sliding along the surface of the water. After so long an interval, I find my fondness for these amusements but little abated. I was never more happy to escape from school than I am now to escape from business to some sequestered spot, to spend a truant day, just as I have done five-and-twenty years ago. There is a place about twelve miles from this, close to a little river, about half the size of Kelvin, with its banks shaded with large trees, in the midst of which stands the house or bower of Captain Irton, who has little to do himself and is always ready to stroll or swim. I often visit him in this solitary retreat, and spend the day rationally, as I think, between walking, swimming, and fishing in a basket boat: and if patience be a virtue, a basket-boat is an excellent school for it; for I have sat in it three hours, with the sun burning almost as much from the water as from the heavens, without catching a single minnow.

I mean to go there the day after to-morrow, to enjoy two or three Northside days. The place where

I am now is far from being so pleasant, because, besides being the station of a cutcherry, and a large noisy village, it is on the high road from Kisnagerry to Salem and Sarkasdroog; by which means, though I have many visitors whom I am happy to see, I have sometimes others who are as tedious as any of your forenoon gossips. We have no inns in this country; and as we have much less ceremony than you have at home, it is always expected that a traveller, whether he is known or not, shall stop at any officer's house he finds on the road. When a tiresome fellow comes across me, it is not merely a forenoon's visit of which you complain so heavily, but I have him the whole day and night to myself. I do not, however, stand so much upon form as you do with your invaders. I put him into a hut called a room, with a few pamphlets or magazines, and a bundle of Glasgow newspapers, and leave him to go to business, whether I have any or not, till dinner-time, at four in the afternoon; and if I find that his conversation is too oppressive for my constitution to bear, I give him a dish of tea,—for we have no suppers now in this country,—and leave him at seven to go to more business. There is nothing in the world so fatiguing as some of these tête-à-têtes—they have frequently given me a headache in a hot afternoon; and I would rather walk all the time in the sun, than sit listening, to a dull fellow, who entertains you with uninteresting stories, or what is worse, with uninteresting questions. I am perfectly of your way of thinking about visitors. I like to have them either all at once in a mass, or if they come in ones and twos

to have them of my own choosing. When they volunteer, I always wish to see two or three of them together, for then you have some relief; but it is a serious business to be obliged to engage them singly. I wonder that we waste so much of time in praying against battle and murder, which so seldom happen, instead of calling upon Heaven to deliver us from the calamity to which we are daily exposed of troublesome visitors.

LETTER 12

To His Father

Bekul, 6th August, 1799.

. . . . You will think it extraordinary, that instead of writing you military details as usual, until Erskine was tired of them, I should have been silent during the late short but eventful war, which terminated the life and the empire of Tippoo Sultan, and gave us such complete revenge for all the murders and desolations committed by the house of Hyder. But bad health and a great deal of business, at least more than I could manage in the weak state I was in, rendered me not only incapable of writing, but even of observing with attention what was going on.

During the whole of the campaign I was so oppressed with lassitude that I could not go through half of my public duty, and I therefore never thought of writing private letters. The most material transactions will appear in the newspapers;

and I hope that a great deal of the correspondence of Hyder and Tippoo, with the different powers of India, and with Turkey, Persia, and France, will be hereafter published. The whole of the correspondence with the French, previous to the late war, is amongst the records, as also the offensive and defensive alliance against us. The great blow which Tippoo received at the conclusion of the former war, by the loss of half his country, appears to have confounded him, and to have worked so great a change on his character, that he was at times reported to be mad. He never had the talents of his father; but he had always, till that event, paid his army regularly, kept it in good order, given a great deal of attention to business, and managed his finances tolerably well; but from that time his whole soul seems to have been filled with nothing but schemes of vengeance; and so eager was he for the end, that he overlooked the means. A restless spirit of innovation, and a wish to have everything to originate from himself, was the predominant feature of his character. He had, some years before the French Revolution, new-named all the forts in his dominions, and the whole sixty years of the Indian cycle; and, though a bigoted Mussalman, he had altered the venerable names of the Arabic months, and substituted another era for that of the Hegira. He had abolished all old weights and measures and coins, and introduced new; and he had new-modelled his revenue and army, and issued various codes of regulations to his civil and military officers. After the reverse of his fortunes in 1792, the rage for novelty, instead of abating,

increased; and he issued more regulations, not only to the principal officers of state, but to those in the most subordinate situations—to the persons who had the charge of his gardens, of his buildings, of feeding his bullocks and his elephants, etc., none of which were ever attended to. Most of them contained an exordium by himself, setting forth the excellence of loyalty and the true faith, and endeavouring to inspire his subjects with a detestation of Caffers or infidels, that is to say, Europeans in general, but particularly Englishmen, by lavishing curses and execrations upon them. Happening one day to pick up his instructions to the superintendent of his bullocks, the first line I read was, "Caffer—a dog—and a hog, are all three brothers in the same family." He divided his government into seven principal boards or departments, one of which was the navy, without a single ship of war. He divided his country into thirty-seven provinces, under Dewans or Assophs, as he called them; and sub-divided these again into one thousand and twenty-five inferior districts, having each a Tishildar, with an expensive establishment of revenue-servants. He knew no way of checking abuses but by augmenting the number of men in office, and sending two Assophs to almost every province, instead of one, to prey upon the inhabitants. The defalcation of the revenue, which had been formerly about twenty per cent, was now above fifty. His bigotry led him to make none but Mussalmans Tishildars; most of them could neither read nor write, and were often selected from the lowest ranks of the military, at the annual muster in his

presence, merely from some fancy that he took to their looks. These men were frequently recalled in the course of a year or two and placed at one of the principal boards. This so disgusted the old servants of his father, that many of them retired from public affairs, to lead a private life in their own houses. By these and such like promotions, the number of officers was augmented, while that of his fighting-men was diminished. He had about one hundred and fifty general officers to an army that did not exceed twenty-one thousand regular infantry and eight thousand horse, though he had above thirty-thousand infantry and twelve thousand five hundred horse on his returns; while his father had not ten generals when he was in the Carnatic, with forty-thousand horse, and above sixty-thousand infantry of different kinds. His army fell every year more and more into arrears; and when Seringapatam was attacked, it had only received two issues of pay during the last fourteen months. Besides an expensive civil and military establishment, beyond the resources of his revenue, he was carrying on repairs in most of his forts, but particularly Seringapatam itself, on which he had laid out, since the former war, about twelve lacs of pagodas. He did not however hesitate, amidst all his difficulties, to enter into a treaty with France, by which he engaged to defray all the charges of a body of from twelve to twenty thousand French troops. One of the articles shows the extravagant imaginations with which he sometimes amused himself. He proposes that the French shall land at Sedashagur, to the southward of Goa; that it shall

be taken from the Portuguese and given up to them; that Bombay shall next be taken and given to the French; the whole Malabar coast shall then be reduced; after which they shall pursue their conquests up the Coromandel coast, take Madras and Masulipatam, from whence he shall detach forty thousand horse and as many infantry, under one of his generals, along with the French to subdue Bengal. Before entering into this treaty, he sent round queries in writing to the members of the seven principal departments, desiring their opinions upon the policy of the measure. His own sentiments were known, and they all therefore recommended its adoption except one man, who had been formerly a merchant, and belonged at that time, I believe, to the Board of Trade: he dissuaded him from having anything to do with the French; tells him that the plan cannot succeed; that the very act of consulting them was imprudent; that the secret could not be kept by so many men; that the English would hear of it, and attack him before he could receive assistance: but he was too much bent upon war himself to be turned from it by the arguments of one man; besides, he was continually urged to it by Seid Saheb, who, being his father-in-law, could take more liberty than any other person with him. In private conferences, when no one was present but a confidential secretary, he used frequently to ask him, how long they were to sit down quietly under their disgrace and calamity, and to tell him that he had considered him dead as a prince from the day he surrendered half his country, and that he should always regard him in that light until he

should conquer it again. After the campaign opened, he did very little to retard the progress of our armies. His design against the Bombay army was well conceived, but very badly conducted.

It appeared from the papers found after his death, that they had obtained very accurate information of the paths leading through the woods to the rear of the advanced brigade which he meant to attack. It appears by General Stuart's public letters, that the first intimation he had of his design was the sight of his tents; and that even then he did not believe it was him, but a detachment of no great consequence. Had Tippoo not been fool enough to have shown himself by pitching his tents at Periapatam; had he remained that day in the open air, and marched early next morning against Colonel Montresor's brigade, he would, without doubt, have cut it off, and most probably the greatest part of the rest of the army would have shared the same fate. His repulse here seems to have discouraged him so much, that he gave very little interruption to the march of the grand army. As it approached, he fell back, and shut himself up in his capital, placing his dependence upon the siege being raised for want of provisions in camp, and upon his holding out till the Cavery should fill, and make the carrying on of any further operations against it impracticable. He seldom went to the palace during the siege, but spent most of his time sitting behind a cavalier, or visiting the ramparts. He did not go towards the breach,—the state of it was concealed from him by his principal officers; but one of his servants, impatient at hearing the false reports

brought to him, called out to him that there was a breach, and that it would soon be practicable. This intelligence seemed to rouse him,—he resolved to see it with his own eyes; and therefore, on the following morning, which was that of the day previous to the assault, he went early to the spot; he viewed with amazement the condition in which it was; he shook his head, but said nothing; he returned to his old station behind the cavalier, where he remained sullen and buried in thought, as if conscious that his doom was now fixed, seldom making any inquiries about what was doing, and driving away with an angry answer whoever came to ask him for orders. Bigot as he was, his apprehensions rendered him superstitious enough to induce him to invite the aid of Hindoo prayers and ceremonies to avert the evil which threatened him, and to call for an Hindoo astrologer to draw a favourable omen from the stars. With a man of this description he spent the last morning of his life; he desired him to consult the heavens. The man answered that he had done so, and that they were unfavourable unless peace was made. He was ordered to look again, but returned the same answer. Tippoo gave him money, and desired him to pray for him, and then drank water out of a black stone as a charm against misfortune.

When the assault commenced, he repaired to the outer ramparts; but being driven from them, he fell as he was returning into the body of the place, in a passage under the rampart, called the Water-Gate, his horse falling at the same time; and his palankeen being thrown down, the road was choked

up, and almost every soul in the gateway slain. Though he had got a wound in the leg, and two or three balls in the body, he was still alive, and continued in this state above an hour. One of his servants, Rajoo Khan, who lay wounded beside him, asked his leave once or twice, when parties of soldiers were passing, to discover him, but he always commanded him to be silent. At last a soldier who was passing in quest of plunder, and at whom it is said he attempted to cut, shot him through the head: the ball entered the right temple, and passed through the left jaw. It was for a long time thought that he had concealed himself in the palace; and while parties were searching it to no purpose, in order to put him to death for the murder of nine Europeans who had fallen into his hands on the 5th of April, the Killedar reported that he had been seen lying in the Water-Gate. As it was now dark, a party was sent with lights to search for him. After dragging out a great number of bodies, he was at last found half-naked: he was known by his long drawers, and by some marks about his person. He was drawn from amidst a heap of slain, among whom his legs were twisted; and carried to the palace, where he was laid on a palankeen, and exposed to view all next day, in order that no doubt might remain of his death: and in the evening he was buried with military honours, in the cypress garden, by the side of his father.

LETTER 13

To His Sister

Deria Doulet Garden, June 30th, 1799;
a palace built by Hyder, near Seringapdtam

I have now turned my back upon the Baramahl and the Carnatic, and with a deeper sensation of regret than I felt on leaving home; for at that time the vain prospect of imaginary happiness in new and distant regions occupied all my thoughts; but I see nothing where I am now going to compensate for what I have lost—a country and friends that have been endeared to me by a residence of twenty years. I feel also a great reluctance to renew the labour which I have so long undergone in the Baramahl. It leaves few intervals for amusement, or for the studies I am fond of, and wears out both the body and the mind. Colonel Read has sent in his resignation; and I had anticipated the pleasure of sitting down in the Baramahl, and enjoying a few years of rest after so many of drudgery; for that country is now surveyed and settled, and requires very little attention to keep it in order. It is a romantic country, and every tree and mountain has some charm which attaches me to them. I began a few years ago to make a garden near Derampoory, sheltered on one side by a lofty range of mountains, and on the other by an aged grove of mangoes, I made a tank in it about a hundred feet square, lined with stone steps; and the spring is so plentiful that, besides watering abundantly every herb and tree, there is always a depth of ten or twelve feet of

clear water for bathing. I have numbers of young orange, mango, and other fruit-trees in a very thriving state. I had a great crop of grapes this year, and my pine-beds are now full of fruit. When I happened to be at Derampoory I always spent at least an hour every day at this spot; and to quit it now goes as much to my heart as forsaking my old friends. I must now make new ones, for there is not a man in Canara whom I ever saw in my life. Nothing would have induced me to go there had I not been pointed out for the business of settling that country. I had at one time declined having anything to do with it, and only two considerations brought me, after wavering some days, to accept of it: the one, a sense of public duty; and the other, the chance which I might have of being enabled to return a year or two sooner to Europe than I could have done by remaining in the Baramahl; but I can have no certainty of this, as my salary is not yet fixed.

The village where I am now halted is seventeen miles west of Seringapatam, and was formerly the Jagheer of Tipoo's exercrable Dewan, Meer Sadek, who was cut in pieces by his own troops at the memorable storm of that capital. It was burned down by Cummer ul Din, when he followed General Floyd to Periapatam, to hinder his junction with the Bombay army in April last; and the inhabitants are now busy roofing their houses. The burning of a village is not so great a calamity in this country as might be imagined; for the houses are in general so mean that, among the lower ranks, the labour of a man and his family for a couple of days will repair the

mischief; and even among the middling ranks eight or ten rupees will cover all the damage that their houses can suffer from fire. I am now sitting in a choultry more than half unroofed by fire. The few tiles that remain shelter me from the transient glimpses of the sun, but not from the light showers which the strong wind which blows night and day at this season of the year is driving over my head in quick succession from the skirts of the Malabar monsoon. I have been forced to put this letter in my table several times since I began writing, to save it from the rain. My tent is a mile or two behind, because, being wet, it is so heavy that the bullocks can hardly bring it on; and I thought the best way I could pass my time till it came up would be in giving you some account of my situation and prospect.

LETTER 14

To His Mother

Cundapore, August 25th, 1800.

The last letter I have received from you is dated fourteen months ago, in June, 1799. I am sorry you have quitted your country-house for so trifling a consideration as the expense, which could never occasion any inconvenience in me to discharge. There is indeed no way in which I could employ my money, that would yield me half so much pleasure as to hear that it had enabled you to enjoy the country air—to have your own dairy and garden, and to walk in the fields—a recreation of which you

were so fond at Northside. Oliver Colt will make no difficulty in advancing my father any sum he may want for hiring a house in the country next summer. In ancient times, the day of flitting to the country was always to me the most joyful day in the year, and that of leaving it the most melancholy, though I used to get often wet in October, when returning home from school. I should think very little of such wettings now; for they are but mist compared to the rains of Canara. I have seen only one fair day since the 26th of May, and very few others in which the fair intervals have exceeded three or four hours: for the last five days it has not stopped a moment, day or night. During these three months I have very seldom been able to venture to walk a mile from the house, without being caught in a shower. A man from Greenock would think of defending himself with his great-coat. Such a piece of dress would however be only an useless incumbrance; for he might as well expect that it would keep him dry when swimming, as when exposed to the torrents which in this country descend from the skies. I would rather live upon ensign's pay in a sunny climate, than be sovereign of Canara. If I can contrive to get away, I shall go, though it will probably cost me near half my income. The very months which are here so uncomfortable, are, beyond the Ghauts, the pleasantest in the whole year. The sky is generally overcast, and only just rain enough to prevent the ground from being parched up. After my saying so much about rain, you will naturally imagine that I am surrounded by swamps, and can scarcely stir

a step without sinking to the neck in mud. It might have been so before the Flood; but at present, after it has been raining for a month, the surface of the earth, after one hour of fair weather, is as dry as if it had not rained at all. The action of the rains has long ago washed away everything that is soluble in water, and left nothing but the skeleton of the earth, which everywhere presents a rugged surface, formed either of rock, or of a cake of gravel many feet thick, or of coarse sand; and all is so uneven, that the water runs off immediately; or if there be a few level spots, the soil is so porous, that it is absorbed almost instantaneously. The moment the rain ceases, no water is to be seen except on the rice-fields, which may compose about one-fiftieth part of the land. All the rest remains uncultivated, because it will produce nothing. The thin coat of grass with which it is covered, is burned up after a few weeks of dry weather, and leaves a naked mass of rock or gravel exposed to the sun; so that were it not for the rich verdure of the trees, which spring up where nothing else will grow, Canara would look more bleak than the most barren spot in Scotland. What are usually called the pleasures of the country, are unknown in Canara. We can see no flocks feeding, for it does not produce a single sheep; it can hardly be said to produce cows, for I don't believe that the milk of a hundred of the diminutive black race it possesses would make a pound of butter. And we cannot ramble among cultivated fields, for the whole country is waste, except the rice-fields, which are overflowed.

LETTER 15

To His Sister

(Extract from his Journal)

22nd January 1800

I am now again seated at the side of a rivulet darkened with lofty trees. I have come about ten miles; but as I understand that Soopah is only four miles farther, I mean to go on again the moment I see my tent come up: for I am not sure that it is on the road, and were it to miss me, I might be obliged to spend the night under a tree, which is not pleasant in such cold weather, when there is no military enterprise in view by which I might comfort myself with the reflection of its being one of the hardships of war. I passed the greatest part of the night in endeavouring to keep myself warm, but with very little success; the covering I had was too scanty, and all my most skilful manoeuvres to make it comfortable were therefore to no purpose. The thermometer at daybreak was at 36. It was 78 yesterday in the shade at three o'clock, which is the hottest time of the day: it will I suppose, be about the same degree today. Such heat would be thought scorching at home, but here it is rather pleasant than otherwise. I enjoy the sun when his beams find an opening among the branches and fall upon me, and were it not for the glare of the paper I would not wish them away. Nothing can be more delightful than this climate at this season of the year. The sun is as

welcome as he ever is in your cold northern regions; and though from 70 to 80 is the usual heat of the day, there is something so light, so cheerful, and refreshing in the breezes, which are continually playing, that it always feels cool. They are more healthy and sprightly than the gales which sported round Macbeth's castle, where the good King Duncan said "the martins delighted to build:" My road today was an avenue of twenty or thirty yards broad through the forest. The trees were taller and thicker than I had yet seen them. The bending branches of the bamboo frequently met and formed a kind of Gothic arch. I passed many small rice-fields, and five or six rivulets. The most extensive prospect I had the whole way was over a flat of rice-fields, about a quarter of a mile wide and a mile long, bounded at the farther end by a group of conical hills covered with wood, beyond which I could not see. It was in woods like these that the knights and ladies of romance loved to roam; but the birds that inhabit them are not the musical choristers who, at the approach of Aurora, or when a beautiful damsel opened her dazzling eyes and shed a blaze of light over the world, were ever ready with their songs. They do certainly preserve the ancient custom here of hailing the appearance of Aurora; but it is with chirping and chattering, and every sort of noise but music. I must however except some species of the dove and jungle-cock; for, though they cannot warble, the one has a plaintive, and the other a wild note, that is extremely pleasing. The lark is the only musical bird I have met with in India. But notwithstanding the want

of music and damsels, I love to rise before the sun and prick my steed through these woods and wilds under a serene sky, from which I am sure no shower will descend for many months.

31st January.—I have been for these eight days past at Soopah, a miserable mud-fort, garrisoned by a company of sepoys. The village belonging to it contains about a dozen of huts, situated at the junction of two deep sluggish rivers. The jungle is close to it on every side, and the bamboos and forest trees with which, since the creation, the surrounding hills are covered, seem scarcely to have been disturbed. Every evening after sunset a thick vapour rose from the river and hid every object from view till two hours after sunrise. I was very glad this morning to leave such a dismal place. I had for my companion, every day at dinner, the officer who commanded. He was one of those insipid souls whose society makes solitude more tiresome. I was, to my great surprise, attacked one morning by a party of four officers from Goa, headed by Sir William Clarke. He was going as far as Hullehall to see the country. I told him he ought to begin where he proposed ending, for that all on this side of it was such a jungle that he never would see a hundred yards before him, and that all beyond it was an open country. He had put himself under the direction of an engineer officer as his guide, and had fixed on a spot some miles farther on for their encampment, so that he could only stay about an hour with me. He gave me the first account of the Duke of York's landing

in Holland; but the overland packet, he said, brought nothing from Egypt.

The country through which I came to-day was a continuation of the same forest, through which I have now been riding about sixty miles. My ride to-day was about twelve miles; not a single hut, and only one cultivated field in all that distance. After the first four miles I got rid of the hilly, uneven country in which I had so long been; and the latter part of my journey was over a level country, still covered with wood, but the trees neither so tall, nor growing so close together, as those I had left behind. I could have walked, and even in many places rode, across the wood in different directions, which would have been impossible on any of the preceding days. I have halted under a large banyan tree, in the middle of a circular open space about five or six hundred yards in diameter. One half of it is occupied by a natural tank covered with water-lilies. The rest is a field which was cultivated last year. It was just in such a forest as this that the characters in 'As You Like It' used to ramble. What an idle life I have led since I came to India! In all that long course of years, which I look back to sometimes with joy, sometimes with grief, I have scarcely read five plays, and only one novel. I have dissipated my precious time in reading a little history, and a great deal of newspapers, and politics, and Persian. I am not sure that I have looked into Shakespeare since I left home: had I had a volume of him in my pocket, I might have read the "Midsummer Night's Dream," while I was sitting two hours under the

banyan tree, waiting for my writing table and breakfast; but instead of this, I entered into high converse with a Mahratta boy who was tending a few cows. He told me that they gave each about a quart of milk a-day: this is a great deal in India. Twenty cows would hardly give so much in Canara. He told me also, that the cows, and the field where we sat, belonged to a Siddee. He said a Hubshee. This is the name by which the Abyssinians are distinguished in India. He told me that his master lived in a village in the wood, near a mile distant, which consisted of about twenty houses, all inhabited by Hubshees. I was almost tempted to suspect that the boy was an evil sprite, and that the Hubshees were magicians, who had sent him out with a flock of cows, who might be necromancers for any thing that I knew, to waylay me, or decoy me to their den. But I soon recollected that I had read of Africans being in considerable numbers in this part of India. They are, no doubt, the descendants of the African slaves formerly imported in great numbers by the kings of Bijapoor and the other Muhammadan princes of the Deccan, to be employed in their armies, who were sometimes so powerful as to be able to usurp the government.

LETTER 16

To His Father

Kalwapilli, 3rd May, 1801.

I am now writing in my tent on the banks of the Pennar, about fourteen miles east of Calliundroog,

which place I left this morning. I am on my way to Tarputty, where I hope I shall be able to halt for a few weeks. The country I am travelling through is more destitute of trees than any part of Scotland I ever saw: for from Pennacandah, by Gootty and Adoni, to the Kistna, we scarcely meet with one in twenty miles, and throughout that whole space there is nowhere a clump of fifty. This nakedness, however, is not, like yours in Scotland, the fault of the soil; for everywhere it is good, and capable of producing grain and trees in abundance. It is, I believe, to be attributed to the levelness of the country having always made it the scene of the operations of great armies of horse. The branches have been cut down to feed the elephants and camels, which always accompany such armies in great multitudes, and the trunks to boil the grain for the horses; and a long continuance of oppressive government has extinguished every idea of forming new plantations. While journeying over these dreary places, I have often wished for some of the friendly groves of the Baramahl, or the dark forests of Soondah, to shelter me from the burning heat of the sun. The average height of the thermometer in my tent, for the whole of the last month, was 107° at two p.m., and 78° at sunrise. At this instant, half-past one p.m., it is 98°, yet the air feels pleasant and cool; for there was a heavy shower four days ago, and the sky has been cloudy and the wind high ever since. It is now whistling through the canvas, and makes me almost fancy myself at sea, scudding before a strong tropical gale. My way of life naturally turns my attention to the

weather; but the mercury has been more than usually in my head to-day, in consequence of reading in a newspaper some remarks on the probable causes of the yellow fever in America. Among these are reckoned the prodigious heat of 96°, and the sudden changes from heat to cold, which are sometimes from 30 to 40 degrees in the course of a few days; but these causes produce no such effects here. I have not seen the mercury at noon under 96° for these three months past; and as to sudden extremes, the thermometer, from the beginning of November till the end of January, usually stands at 50° at sunrise and 80° at noon. In Soondah the heat at noon is the same; but it is often under 40° in the mornings. I have seen it as low as 34. I am convinced, however, that the fever I had two years ago, though there was nothing yellow in it, arose from my exposing myself to the morning air; for I always rise about half an hour before the sun, and usually walk in front of my tent without hat or coat for an hour, which is the coldest in all the twenty-four. I was often so cold, on sitting down to breakfast, that I could scarcely hold anything in my hand. That fever has now been long gone, and I am at present as well as ever I was in my life. My sight, if I do not flatter myself, as men who are growing old often do, is better than it was a dozen of years ago; for I can read by candlelight without any inconvenience, which I could not do without great pain for many years after I had an inflammation in my eyes at Amboor, in 1789; but whether the salutary change has been occasioned by fever, or by my breathing a moist

atmosphere, like that of my native land, on the Malabar coast, where my clothes were hardly ever perfectly dry, or by my having unknowingly inhaled some of Dr Beddoes' dephlogisticated nitrous gas, I have not fully ascertained. I have seldom, I believe, given you so much detail respecting myself; but you must lay this to the charge of those who killed Tippoo. Had he been spared, he would have occupied the chief place in all my pages to you. Erskine often complained of his constant appearance in all my letters. When I write to her next, I must introduce the Nizam in his room. I doubt however that he will live so long. He has, at any rate, lived long enough to transfer all his possessions south of Toombuddra, and of the Kistna after its junction with the Toombuddra, to the Company, on condition of their defraying all charges attending the subsidiary force now with him.

LETTER 17

To Colonel Read

Hundi Anantpoor, 16*th June*, 1801.

I have often been thinking of writing to you, but I have led such a life these two last years, that I have been obliged to give up all private writing, and I should hardly have begun again just now, if your old Gamashah, Hunmunt Row, had not made his appearance the other day as an Umedwar, and told me that Narnapah, by the blessing of God, and your Dowlett, were in good health, which I

thought you would still be glad to hear; he says that both of them were *heyran* and *perishan* with the climate of Madras, and that Narnapah got chapped lips and a sore mouth, and slavered about a pucka sear a day. The old gentleman is now with Mr Stratton, investigating the state of the revenue in the Calastri and Venkutghury Pollams. Your friend Alexander Read, who is now Collector of the northern division of Canara, has, I imagine, long ago described that country to you. To a revenue man it is by far the most interesting country in India, and had it not been for the confinement during the five months' monsoon, I never would have left it. All land is private property, except such estates as may have fallen to the Sirkár from the failure of heirs, or the expulsion of the owners by oppression, under the Mysore government. By means of a variety of Sunnuds, I traced back the existence of landed property above a thousand years, and it has probably been in the same state from the earliest ages; the inhabitants having so great an interest in the soil, naturally adopted the means of preserving their respective estates, by correct title-deeds and other writings. Besides the usual revenue accounts, all private transfers of land, and all public Sunnuds respecting it, were registered by the Curnums, who, as accountants, are much superior to our best Mutsiddies. In consequence of this practice, there is still a great mass of ancient and authentic records in Canara. I made a large collection of Sunnuds, with the view of endeavouring to discover when land first became private property; but I was obliged to leave them

all behind, and abandon my design. Several of them were reported to be older than Shaliwahan, but I had not time to ascertain this fact; among the very few that were translated, the oldest was, I believe, in the eighth century; from which it appeared that there was then no Sirkar land; for the Sunnud, which was for the endowment of a pagoda, states that the government rent of such and such estates is granted to the Bramans, that the land itself is not granted, because it belonged to the landlord. All Enaumdars, therefore, in Canara, are merely pensioners, who have an assignment on a particular estate; they have not even a right to residence upon the estate from which they draw their subsistence. Were they to attempt to establish themselves, the owner would eject them with very little ceremony. The antiquity of landed property, and the sharing it equally among all the male children, have thrown it into a vast number of hands. The average Sirkar rents of estates is perhaps twenty or twenty-five pagodas, but there are some which pay near a thousand. The average of the Sirkar rent is about one-fourth of the gross produce; but on many estates, not more than one-sixth. Litigations are endless in a country where there are so many proprietors; and Punchayets are continually sitting to decide on the rights of the various claimants. Landed property being thus the subject of discussion among all classes of Rayets, everything relating to it is as well understood as in England. The small landlords are probably as comfortable as in any country in Europe. The never-failing monsoon, and the plentiful harvests of

rice, far beyond the consumption of the inhabitants, secure them from ever feeling the distress of scarcity. Rents are therefore easily collected—no complaints about inability—no absconding at the close of the year. Even after all the disturbances of a civil war, I had not a single application for remission, except from one or two villages near Jumalabad, which had been twice plundered by the garrison; and in this case they paid the money before making the demand, saying that unless it was returned they could not replace their stock of cattle, so as to carry on to the usual extent the cultivation of the ensuing year. I often felt a pleasure, which I never have experienced in any other part of India, in seeing myself, at the time of the Jummabundy, under the fly of a tent, among some large trees, surrounded by four or five hundred landlords, all as independent in their circumstances as your yeomen. I could not help observing on these occasions the difference that good feeding makes on men as well as on other animals. The landlords of Canara are, I am convinced, fatter in general than those of England. I was sometimes tempted to think, on looking at many who had large estates, and particularly at the Potails, that they had been appointed on account of their weight. Many of them were quite oppressed by the heat, when I felt no inconvenience from it; and they used to sit with nothing on but their blue Surat aprons, their bodies naked, and sweating like a corpulent Briton just hoisted from a Masulah boat on the beach at Madras; but their labourers were as miserable-looking peasants as any in the Carnatic.

In Canara there is already established to our hands all that the Bengal system, supposing it to succeed according to our wishes, can produce in a couple of centuries—a wide diffusion of poverty, and a permanent certain revenue, not only from the wealth of the inhabitants, but also farther secured by the saleableness of land. What a wide difference between that province and our late acquisition here, where land is of even less value, and the rayets more unsettled than in the Baramahl! You will be surprised to hear of the revenue being so much below the schedule of Ninety-two. This has been occasioned by the ravages of the allied armies of horse and Brinjarries in Lord Cornwallis's war, by the oppression of the Nizam's Government, and by their having been overrated. The settlement this year is one million one hundred and two thousand pagodas, exclusive of village servants. It will probably be twelve and a half lacs next year, and may in four or five years get to fourteen and a half or fifteen lacs. The country is overrun with Poligars; I have between thirty and forty who send me Vakeels. They are not confined to one corner, but are in every district. I am trying, with the help of Dugald Campbell, general of division here, to get rid of as many as possible; but it will take some campaigns to clear them out. Were I to labour as much as ever you did for seven years, there would not be so much order and system as you had in the Baramahl the first year. This reflection makes me sometimes wish that I had never entered into the revenue line at all. All the drudgery you suffered was comfort to what I am obliged to

undergo, for without it there would be no getting on. You had a small society in your family and occasional visitors, besides your gala-days, when all the society were assembled; and you had the cheering prospect of the country improving under you: but I have none of all this. I have not had one holiday since I entered Canara—going out after four o'clock to dine and escape a night cutcherry was the greatest indulgence I ever had there: I have still less here, and I see no chance of getting more. I am usually seated before eight in the morning, and never stir till sunset, often not till dark, besides a meeting to hear letters at night. This is not for one or two weeks, but for months together; and if it has not made me blind, as you said you were, it has done worse, it has given me the staggers, for I often reel when I get up as if I were drunk. As to company, I don't see an European in three months. I have got four deputies, but they are at Cumbum, Adwani, etc. their different divisions. Some of them will do, but others are good for nothing but to exercise my patience, which is nearly exhausted. I am very sorry I ever left the Baramahl, and should be very happy to be there again at this instant as your assistant, receiving a letter of twenty sheets of queries to answer. James George is the only old stander there; he has made some new erections, and completed his arrangements by taking a wife—Miss Johnson, daughter of a former counsellor, who is said to be accomplished. But Kisnagerry is no longer a military station, and will be as solitary almost as Pinagur. Futty Khan, Irton, and Noble are the only old cannibals in this quarter; I

have seen none of them since January. Futty, ever since his campaign against Dhoondee, has been a prodigious rider; he makes nothing of a few hundred miles, and is now trotting up from Madras. I know nothing of your other friends. Dugald Campbell, as I have told you, commands here; Stevenson, Malabar and Canara; Colonel Wellesley in Mysore; and though last not least, your old staff Pop Munro, at Gurrumcondah, where, though only temporary, he plays the commandant in a very respectable manner. Simmons is collector of Seringapatam. I hope I shall hear from you after you have run your rig, and made your *debut* at all celebrated places of business or amusement. Let me know how you like the change upon the whole, and what you think of the Coories and Loogwassis in your neighbourhood. If ever you visit Glasgow, I trust you will call on my father; he will be very happy to see you, and he will ask more questions perhaps than you will be able to answer. You will find no spot in Scotland so naked as the Ceded Districts, where there is hardly a tree to be seen from Penimcondah to Adwani. Gurrumcondah is something like Baramahl, but has more topes and tanks. Cumbum has also a great deal of wet grain; but all the other districts have little else but dry grain. I suppose you have ere now encountered Arthur Young, and had some debates with him on Sagwulli and Tuckawi. I dare say he never saw buffalo-horns growing; and he would probably, after all his rant about turnips, make but an indifferent collector. Give us your opinion on all the wonders you see.

LETTER 18

To Mr Cockburn

Ponnimalah, 12th December 1801.

Since writing to you yesterday, I have received yours of the 3rd giving me the alarm about Thackeray. I heard of it the 27th of last month, and instantly wrote to the General to send a party, and I have offered a reward of one thousand rupees for the potail of Ternikull, by whose orders the murders were committed. Such outrages are frequent in the Ceded Districts, particularly in Gurrumcondah; but I do not write upon them, because it would only be troubling the Board to no purpose; and you would have heard nothing of the late affair, had Thackeray not happened to be on the spot. Why did I suffer him, you say, to be without a guard? Because I think he is much safer without one. I traversed Canara in every direction unaccompanied by a single Sepoy or military Peon, at a time when it was in a much more distracted state than the Ceded Districts have ever been, without meeting, or even apprehending any insult.

I do the same here:—there is not a single man along with me, nor had I one last year when I met all the Gurrumcondah Poligars in congress, attended by their followers. I had deprived them of all their cowle, and they knew that I meant to reduce them to the level of Potails, yet they never showed me the smallest disrespect. The natives of India, not excepting Poligars, have, in general, a good deal of reverence for public authority. They suppose that

collectors act only by orders from a superior power; and that, as they are not actuated by private motive, they ought not to become the objects of resentment. I therefore consider the subordinate collectors and myself as being perfectly safe without guards; and that by being without them, we get much sooner acquainted with the people. A Naigue's or Havildar's guard might be a protection in the Carnatic; but it should be none here in the midst of an armed nation. Nothing under a company could give security, and even its protection might not always be effectual, and would probably, in the present state of the country, tend rather to create than to prevent outrages. However this may be, such a guard for every collector cannot be spared from the military force now in the country. The murders of Adoni seem to have originated in private revenge. I directed Thackeray to add a certain sum to the last year's jumma, but to let the people know that it would not be finally settled till my arrival in the district. Under the Nizam's government, many heads of villages had gained considerably by the general desolation of the country, because they got credit for a great deal more than their actual loss by diminution of cultivation. It was necessary to raise the rent of these villages to a fair level with that of others in similar circumstances. The people who brought forward the information required for this purpose are those who have been murdered. They were all natives of Adoni, and one of them was a Gomashta in the cutcherry. The village of Ternikull, like most others in the country, is fortified. The Potail refused to agree to the increase

proposed. The Sheristadar, knowing that there would be no difficulty in settling with the inhabitants, if he were removed for a few days, ordered him off to Adoni; but, instead of obeying, he shut the gates, manned the walls, and murdered, in the cutcherry, the three men who had given in statements of the produce. These unfortunate people, when they saw the pikemen approaching to dispatch them, clung for safety about the Sheristadar, which was the cause of his receiving some accidental wounds. Thackeray, who was encamped near the village, hastened to the gate, and on being refused admittance, attempted to get over the wall. The men above threatened, and called out to him to desist, saying that they had taken revenge of their enemies, but had no intention of opposing the Sirkar; and he at length, very properly, withdrew to his tent. This is the account given me by a Peon who attended him. Now, had he had the guard, about which you are so anxious, it would most likely have occasioned the murder of himself and of all his cutcherry; had it been in the inside, it would have been easily overpowered by one hundred and fifty Peons; and had it been at Thackeray's tent, it would have followed him to scale the wall, and brought on an affray, which would have ended in the destruction of them all. Nothing is more dangerous than a small guard in a turbulent country. The sepoys themselves are apt to be insolent, and to engage in disputes. Cutcherry people are, in general, too ready to employ them in overawing the inhabitants, and have very seldom sufficient sense to judge how far it is safe to go: and a collector

will never meet with any injury, unless he attempts to employ force, which he will hardly think of when he has no sepoys. I am therefore against making use of guards of regulars. Thackeray has always had above a hundred military Peons in his division. I shall give him three hundred more; and he can select an escort from them, who will be sufficient for his protection, if he does not try to scale forts. The conduct of the people of Ternikull, after the murders in the cutcherry, was certainly, with regard to him at least, extremely moderate, and affords a strong proof that he is personally in no danger. On the 22nd November, two days after the affair at Ternikull, three Potails and Curnums were murdered by another Potail of Adoni, for giving true statements to the Sirkar servants. By looking at the map, you will see that Thackeray's division, lying at nearly equal distances from Gooty and Bellari, is better covered by a military force than any other part of the Ceded Districts.

LETTER 19

To Major-General Wellesley

Raydroog, 14th October, 1803.

I have seen several accounts of your late glorious victory over the combined armies of Scindiah and the Berarman, but none of them so full as to give me anything like a correct idea of it; I can, however, see dimly through the smoke of the Mahratta guns (for yours, it is said, were silenced) that a gallanter action has not been fought for many years

in any part of the world. When not only the disparity of numbers, but also of real military force, is considered, it is beyond all comparison a more brilliant and arduous exploit than that of Aboukir. The detaching of Stevenson was so dangerous a measure, that I am almost tempted to think that you did it with a view of sharing the glory with the smallest possible numbers. The object of his movement was probably to turn the enemy's flank, or to cut them off from the Ajunla Pass; but these ends would have been attained with as much certainty and more security by keeping him with you. As a reserve, he would have supported your attack, secured it against any disaster, and when it succeeded, he would have been at hand to have followed the enemy vigorously. A native army once routed, if followed by a good body of cavalry, never offers any effectual opposition. Had Stevenson been with you, it is likely that you would have destroyed the greatest part of the enemy's infantry; as to their cavalry, when cavalry are determined to run, it is not easy to do them much harm, unless you are strong enough to disperse your own in pursuit of them. Whether the detaching of Stevenson was right or wrong, the noble manner in which the battle was conducted makes up every thing. Its consequences will not be confined to the Deccan, they will facilitate our operations in Hindostan, by discouraging the enemy and animating the Bengal army to rival your achievements. I had written thus far when I received your letter of the 1st of October, and along with it another account of your battle from Hyderabad. It has certainly, as you say,

been a "most furious battle;" your loss is reported to be about two thousand killed and wounded. I hope you will not have occasion to purchase any more victories at so high a price. I subscribe entirely to what you say about the movements of a Mahratta army; I have always been convinced that our own could bring it up. Their bazaar is, if anything, more unwieldly than ours; and though their horse may dash on for a few marches, they must at last wait for it. Light troops are not fond of acting at a distance from the army, but the spirit of enterprise and the hope of plunder often increase that distance. The Mahrattas have long been on the decline, and have in a great measure lost their military spirit; the formation of regular infantry, by throwing all the severe part of service upon them, has deprived the horse of all their boldness and activity. It was the same in Tippoo's army: in proportion as he placed his dependence upon his infantry, the reputation of his cavalry, and with it their exertions, declined. But still Cummer Ul Diu and Gazi Khan were more respectable officers, than any of the Mahratta Sirdars; Meer Saheb, Cummer Ul Diu's father, was the best of all their partisans. He was in the Carnatic with a body of horse, was perfect master of all the open country, and kept our army in a state of siege while Hyder was at Trichinopoly. It is true, he had a body of infantry, but it was not so much the presence of his infantry, as our having no cavalry, that enabled him to run over the country: we had about five hundred horse; had we had two thousand, he could not have done it. Had I not a very poor opinion of Scindia, I

would have suspected his movements upon Hyderabad to have been a feint; his cavalry alone could have done nothing against the force there, supported by General Campbell. I should be more afraid of an irregular body of five thousand, under a daring, enterprising leader, if they have any such, than of their main body. Five thousand might find subsistence without touching the fortified villages; the Nizam's cavalry would probably keep together, and not follow them, but General Campbell would be able to come up with some of them; and the fear of this, even without your hunting them, will probably always keep them at a distance, I hope measures are taking to reinforce your army; you want an addition of at least three or four thousand men to enable you to push your victories. If Perron has been defeated, the great object ought to be to open a communication with the Rajpoot chief: their own cavalry is able to meet Scindiah's, it is only his infantry and guns that alarm them, and these have already been pretty well settled. If you can find subsistence in the Berar country, you will probably be able to force the Rajah to a separate peace, and there will then be no great difficulty in Polandizing Scindiah's dominions.

I go to Bellari in a few days, when I shall inquire into the affair of Bistnapah Pundit's village. I am, however, afraid we shall be able to make nothing of the Poligar, as he can dispose of his own jaghire as he pleases. I cannot pretend to point out any employment for myself in your camp, but if you can find out any for me in which you think I might be useful, I shall be very happy to be called upon.

LETTER 20

To General Wellesley

Cowderbad, 28th November, 1803

I have received your letter of the 1st instant, and have read with great pleasure and interest your clear and satisfactory account of the battle of Assaye. You say you wish to have my opinion on your side; if it can be of any use to you, you have it on your side, not only in that battle, but in the conduct of the campaign. The merit of this last is exclusively your own; the success of every battle must always be shared, in some degree, by the most skilful General with his troops. I must own I have always been averse to the practice of carrying on war with too many scattered armies, and also of fighting battles by the combined attacks of separate divisions. When several armies invade a country on separate sides, unless each of them is separately a match for the enemy's whole army, there is always a danger of their being defeated one after another; because, having a shorter distance to march, he may draw his force together, and march upon a particular army before it can be supported. When a great army is encamped in separate divisions, it must, of course, be attacked in separate columns. But Indian armies are usually crowded together on a spot, and will, I imagine, be more easily routed by a single attack, than by two or three separate attacks by the same force. I see perfectly the necessity of your advancing by one route, and Colonel Stevenson by another, in order to get clear of the defiles in one day: I

know also that you could not have reconnoitred the enemy's position without carrying on your whole army; but I have still some doubts whether the immediate attack was, under all circumstances, the best measure you could have adopted. Your objections to delay are, that the enemy might have gone off and frustrated your design of bringing them to battle, or that you might have lost the advantage of attack, by their attacking you in the morning. The considerations which would have made me hesitate are, that you could hardly expect to defeat the enemy with less than half the loss you actually suffered; that after breaking their infantry, your cavalry, even when entire, was not sufficiently strong to pursue any distance, without which you could not have done so much execution among them as to counterbalance your own loss; and lastly, that there was a possibility of your being repulsed; in which case, the great superiority of the enemy's cavalry with some degree of spirit which they would have derived from success, might have rendered a retreat impracticable. Suppose that you had not advanced to the attack, but remained under arms, after reconnoitring at long-shot distance, I am convinced that the enemy would have decamped in the night, and as you could have instantly followed them, they would have been obliged to leave all or most of their guns behind. If they ventured to keep their position, which seems to me incredible, the result would still have been equally favourable: you might have attacked them in the course of the night; their artillery would have been of little use in the dark; it would have fallen into your hands,

and their loss of men would very likely have been greater than yours. If they determined to attack you in the morning, as far as I can judge from the different reports that I have heard of the ground, I think it would have been the most desirable event that could have happened, for you would have had it in your power to attack them, either in the operation of passing the river, or after the whole had passed, but before they were completely formed. They must, however, have known that Stevenson was approaching, and that he might possibly join you in the morning, and this circumstance alone would, I have no doubt, have induced them to retreat in the night. Your mode of attack, though it might not have been the safest, was undoubtedly the most decided and heroic; it will have the effect of striking greater terror into the hostile army than could have been done by any victory gained with the assistance of Colonel Stevenson's division, and of raising the national military character, already high in India, still higher.

I hear that negotiations are going on at a great rate; Scindiah may possibly be sincere, but it is more likely that one view, at least, in opening them, is to encourage his army, and to deter his tributaries from insurrection. After fighting so hard, you are entitled to dictate your own terms of peace.

You seem to be out of humour with the country in which you are, from its not being defensible. The difficulty of defence must, I imagine, proceed either from want of posts, or from the scarcity of all kind of supplies; the latter is most likely the case, and it can only be remedied by your changing the scene

of action. The Nizam ought to be able to defend his own country, and if you could contrive to make him exert himself a little, you would be at liberty to carry the war into the Berar Rajah's country, which, from the long enjoyment of peace, ought to be able to furnish provisions. He would probably make a separate peace, and you might then draw from his country supplies for carrying on the war with Scindiah.

LETTER 21

To Colonel Read

Punganoor, 6th March, 1804

I have only heard from you once since you left India, in the few lines you sent me from Portsmouth. I have, I believe, only written to you twice, owing partly to my being much occupied, and partly to my not being sure whether you were in England, or on your way back to this country. My secluded situation prevents me from hearing what is going on until long after it is known to every one else, so that I can never communicate anything that you will not have heard both earlier and more correctly from some others of your friends. Many causes have concurred to keep me at a distance from society, and to force me to travel about my districts alone, where I have more business of different kinds than I can well manage. The subordinate collectors having been all removed, and a complete new set given to me last year, has been a great hindrance to my operations; for it has

obliged me not only to continue to retain the greatest part of the country in my own hands, but to look after, for a time, the internal management of the other divisions. I am also a kind of commissary and agent to the army, for almost all their supplies are drawn from this province. I should have thought nothing of it, had it been only to equip them at first starting, but the demand is increasing. Ever since November, 1802, when the preparations for war began, I have never had less than 10,000 and sometimes above 30,000 bullocks in motion; and though peace has now been concluded, I am at this moment sending off 10,000 Wurdah bullocks with rice to General Wellesley's army beyond Aurangabad. I have not only always had the purchase of the supplies, but the payment of most of the bullocks. This bullock business, together with sheep, boats, pay of boatmen, and I do not know what, and the endless disputes and correspondence about accounts, bills, etc., leave me very little time for revenue. For more than three years I have not had a single holiday, and have very rarely risen from business before sunset. I could not have believed, had I not made experiment, that it was possible to undergo such a constant drudgery; but, after all, my time is in some respects very unprofitably employed. You did infinitely more in one month in investigating the condition of the inhabitants, and the principles of revenue, than I do in twelve. Two very bad seasons in this country, and all over the Deccan, have greatly augmented the usual difficulty of finding subsistence for the armies. In some parts

of the Deccan there is a famine, and the scarcity here very nearly approaches to that calamity. The revenue of course has suffered greatly, and now stands at about fourteen lacs of pagodas, instead of sixteen, to which it would have risen this year, had the two last been but ordinary seasons. Now let us turn to other concerns, for you have already had enough of mine. You will be happy to learn that your two old deputies, Macleod and Graham, are both again Collectors. Macleod has probably given you himself his motives for quitting Malabar; his resignation occasioned great surprise at Madras, and gave, I believe, great offence to Lord Clive, who had selected him for the appointment. Lord Bentinck gave him, without any solicitation on his part, the collectorship of Arcot. Macleod thinks that Hurdis has befriended him in this affair. Graham accompanied General Wellesley's army in March last, as deputy pay-master, and on the fall of Ahmednuggur was appointed by the General, Collector of that province, and as it has been ceded by Scindiah, he will probably remain there. I am not certain that it will not be exchanged for some other territory. I hope, however, notwithstanding its being insulated, that it will be retained as a point of junction for our detachments at Poonah and Hyderabad, and as an advanced station, from whence we may, if necessary, hereafter carry our arms beyond the Nerbuddah.

I shall not enter into any details of the late war with the Mahrattas, for, not having been myself in the field, I could give you no information that you will not find in the newspapers. I never entertained

any doubt that our success would be great, but I did not expect that it would have been so rapid, for I could not have believed that the enemy would have shown so little exertion as they did. Our constant succession of victories is chiefly to be attributed to the Bengal and Madras armies having had a much greater body of regular cavalry than in any former war, and to the conduct of Generals Lake and Wellesley in availing themselves of this circumstance to make the campaign entirely offensive, to give the enemy no respite, and to push all their advantages to the utmost. But other causes also contributed greatly to favour our operations. The Mahrattas in general were much weakened by their long dissensions, and Scindiah in particular had suffered heavy losses in his war with Holkar. The introduction of a great body of regular infantry, with a vast train of artillery, had made his armies unwieldy, and, in order to keep up the foot, the cavalry were neglected. They were deficient in number and quality, and as they were considered only a secondary corps to the infantry, they had lost all their spirit of enterprise. They gave very little support to their infantry in the different battles that were fought, and they attempted nothing alone. They fell in during the campaign with several convoys, and, though the escorts were inconsiderable, they did not cut off one of them. I have heard much said of the excellence of Scindiah's battalions, and of the danger to which our power in this country would have been exposed had he been permitted to go on much longer augmenting them. But my own opinion is the very reverse of this, for I think that he could have had

no chance of success, except from his cavalry; and that, as he must have reduced them in proportion as he increased his infantry, every addition to that part of his army would only have tended to weaken his real force. Had he been satisfied with peons instead of battalions, and with a few long field-pieces instead of a cumbersome train of artillery, and had he applied the funds consumed by his infantry to the equipment of his cavalry, his army might not have been so able to meet us in battle, but it would have been much better calculated than it was to have carried on a protracted, harassing, and doubtful war. His infantry was regular enough, but it wanted steadiness, in which it must always be greatly inferior to ours, from the want of a national spirit among its officers, and of the support and animating example of European regiments. At the battle of Assaye, the severest that took place in the course of the war, I do not recollect, among all our killed and wounded officers, one that suffered from a musket-ball or a bayonet—a convincing proof that the Mahratta infantry made very little serious opposition. Its discipline, its arms, and uniform clothing, I regard merely as the means of dressing it out for the sacrifice. Its numerous artillery prevents it from escaping by rapid marches; it is forced to fight, deserted by its cavalry, and slaughtered with very little loss on our side. Scindiah, by abandoning the old system of Mahratta warfare, and placing his chief dependence on disciplined infantry, facilitated the conquests of the states of Poligars and Rajahs, whose forts and jungles might have secured them against his horse; but he at the same time disabled

himself from maintaining a contest with us for he reduced the war to a war of battles and sieges, instead of one of marches and convoys. As long as his battalions are not under French influence, by being commanded by officers of that nation, it is more our interest that he should keep them up than that he should disband them and raise horse.

The treaties lately dictated to the Berar Rajah and Scindiah by General Wellesley have given us a greater accession of territory than we ever gained by any former war. The revenues of Scindiah's cessions are said to amount to one crore and sixty-seven lacs of rupees, and those of the Berarman's to about seventy. I can state this only as report, for I have not seen the schedules. The cessions of Berar are Cuttack, and all the districts intermixed with the Nizam's which formerly paid a part of the revenue to both powers. You will see Scindiah's cession in the treaty which I enclose; they comprehend all the countries north of Jeypoor, Oudepore, and Gohud, together with all his claims upon these Rajahships, which will now, under our protection, form a barrier between him and the Bengal provinces. We have only to put our armies on a better footing to be completely masters of India, and to defy all European and native enemies. I wish you were twenty years younger, and back again here to bundobust some of our new acquisitions. I hear different accounts of your health; some say that you are ill, others that you are well; I hope, at any rate, that you are better than when you left India; that you enjoy the climate of your native land, its society, and all the wonders of its commerce and

manufactures. I have lately had a letter from your old friend Narnapah, telling me that you have sent him a magnificent present of silver atterdans, Kullumdans, etc., and that he is praying Shoborore for the return of Huzzoret. I imagine that, if you have any design of coming out again, you will defer it till after you have seen the event of Buonaparte's threatened invasion, for until that is decided the scene of Europe is much more interesting than in India. I shall in a very few years be rich enough to pay you a visit, but I shall be so old that it will be hardly worth while to go home.

LETTER 22

To His Mother

Raydroog, 23rd October, 1805.

You will have no cause to accuse me of silence if the last ships reach England without accident; for I believe that I have written three letters to you within these three months. You will see by them that your alarms about my health are groundless, and that I am as well as ever I was at home. My only Indian complaint, as I mentioned in one of these letters, is a slight pain, which I sometimes feel in my back, occasioned by a fall in leaping over a ditch, about twelve or fourteen years ago. You will however think very little of it, when you know that it has never, for a single day, prevented me from riding or taking a morning's walk of about four miles, which I do every day at sunrise, if I do not ride. I feel it most after sitting long in one

position. And I am convinced that my father's lumbago at Northside gave him more trouble in a week than mine has given me in twelve years. A much more serious complaint is the deafness which I brought from home, and which is older than my remembrance. The temporary fits which I used to have at home of extemporary deafness are much less frequent in this country; but I am more impatient under them, because a society of grown-up gentlemen are not so easily prevailed upon as my school-fellows were, to raise their voices for my convenience. I have now given you the history of all my ailings, and I imagine they are as few as fall to the lot of most men of my age, even in Scotland. I have been induced by your letter of the 8th of March, the longest I ever received from you, to repeat all that I wrote in a late letter on the state of my health; and I mean also to follow your advice of writing oftener, though I should send but a few lines at a time. With respect to going home, it is my intention to leave India next year; but I have many doubts about adopting your plan of seeking a family of my own. I saw myself some obstacles to it; but you have raised up many more by your alarming account of the manners of modern ladies. As you exclude youth, and beauty, and family from the qualifications of a wife, I suspect that you mean that I should lead to the altar the widow—, or some ancient lady, who has composed a treatise on the education of young women. Had I passed all my life at home, I might perhaps, as my sisters say, have been the fittest person to choose a wife for myself. I might have been acquainted

with her from her early years, known perfectly her temper and disposition, and been in little danger of being deceived on these points; but after the absence of nearly thirty years, spent chiefly in a tent, I shall on my return know as little of the women of my own country as those of any other nation in Europe. And as I shall not have so many opportunities, as younger men, of mixing in female society, I should, if I trusted entirely to my own judgment in the choice of a wife, find most likely, when it was too late, that I had made a bad one. I am therefore inclined to think that it will be the wisest course to be guided by your opinion in this important matter. I am very sorry that you have been obliged to abandon Leven Lodge on account of its distance; because you will, I am afraid, find the want of the garden. Your new house has the advantage of being nearer Mrs Erskine; but from its situation at the corner of two streets, it must be a very noisy place, and can have very little ground. You say that it has more than we had in Glasgow. This may well be, for we had none there.

LETTER 23

To Lord William Bentinck, Governor of Madras

Anantpoor, 11*th August*, 1806.

I have had the honour to receive your Lordship's letter of the 2nd instant. On the first alarm of the conspiracy at Vellore, I dispatched orders to watch the proceedings of the principal people of Gurrum-conda, for I immediately suspected that the sons

of Tippoo Sultan were concerned, and I concluded that if they had extended their intrigues beyond Vellore, the most likely places for them to begin with were Chitteldroog, Nundidroog, Gurrumconda, and Seringapatam.

Gurrumconda is perhaps the quarter in which they would find most adherents, not from anything that has recently happened, but from its cheapness having rendered it the residence of a great number of the disbanded troops of their father, and from the ancestors of Cummer ul Diu Khan having been hereditary Killedars of Gurrumconda under the Mogul empire, before their connexion with Hyder Ally, and acquired a certain degree of influence in the district which is hardly yet done away. The family of Cummer ul Diu is the only one of any consequence attached by the ties of relationship to that of Tippoo Sultan; and I do not think that it has sufficient weight to be at all dangerous without the limits of Gurrumconda.

The Poligars, I am convinced, never will run any risk for the sake of Tippoo's family. Some of them would be well pleased to join in disturbances of any kind, not with the view of supporting a new government, but of rendering themselves more independent. The most restless among them, the Ghattim-man, is fortunately in confinement; and I imagine that the others have had little or no correspondence with the Princes. Had it been carried to any length, I should most likely have heard of it from some of the Poligars themselves.

The restoration of the Sultan never could alone have been the motive for such a conspiracy. Such

an event could have been desirable to none of the Hindoos who form the bulk of the Native troops, and to only a part of the Mussalmans. During the invasion of the Carnatic by Hyder, the Native troops, though ten or twelve months in arrear, though exposed to privations of every kind, though tempted by offers of reward, and though they saw that many who had gone over to him were raised to distinguished situations, never mutinied or showed any signs even of discontent. Occasional mutinies have occurred since that period, but they were always partial, and had no other object than the removal of some particular grievance. The extensive range of the late conspiracy can only be accounted for by the General Orders having been converted into an attack upon religious ceremonies; and though the regulations had undoubtedly no such object, it must be confessed that the prohibition of the marks of caste was well calculated to enable artful leaders to inflame the minds of the ignorant —for there is nothing so absurd but that they will believe it when made a question of religion. However strange it may appear to Europeans, I know that the general opinion of the most intelligent natives in this part of the country is, that it was intended to make the sepoys Christians. The rapid progress of the conspiracy is not to be wondered at, for the circulation of the General Orders prepared the way by spreading discontent; and the rest was easily done by the means of the tuppal, and of sending confidential emissaries on leave of absence. The capture of Vellore, and, still more, the rescinding of the offensive parts of the regula-

tions, will, I have no doubt, prevent any further commotion—for the causes being removed, the discontent which has been excited will soon subside and be forgotten. The Native troops, sensible of their own guilt, will naturally for some time be full of suspicion and alarm; but it is hardly credible that they will again commit any acts of violence.

LETTER 24

To His Sister

Anantpoor, 5th August, 1807.

A number of your letters have reached me within these few months and I am not sure whether or not I have answered any of them; they are dated the 21st of June and 31st of December, 1806, and the 2nd of January and 6th of February, 1807. One of them contains four sheets and a half, which is perhaps the cause of my not having before ventured to confess that I had received it. The climate of Scotland has, by your account, improved very much in its effects on the growth of trees. I find some difficulty in believing this, because it is contrary to the course of nature; for men and women have always observed, that as they grow older, everything else degenerates. The seasons become more inclement, and corn, and animals, and trees more stunted in their growth. But your trees—your ivy—have escaped the influence of this general law, by their having been protected in their tender years by some firs. I remember two of those generous natives of our isle, as you call them, at Northside,

and though they were at least fifty years old, they were scarcely twenty feet high: they certainly did not shoot up three or four feet in a season, in their youth; yet, they were the two most respectable trees in that part of the country; and I doubt if your woods can show anything like them. Trees in this country, with the advantages of artificial watering, hardly ever shoot more than six feet in a season, and in general not more than four or five; but much less if goats get among them. I have a great mind to bring home a flock of five hundred or a thousand, if I can get a passage for them, merely to show you what they can do in one day in your elephant woods. I think they would finish the leaves in the forenoon, and the bark in the afternoon. But it is in vain to talk of trees and goats to a politician; and I wish, therefore, that I could tell you who this Mr. Paul is, about whom you ask. Some say he is a tailor who brough out a long bill against some of Lord Wellesley's staff, and was in consequence provided for; others say that he was an adventurer, who sold knicknacks to the Nabobs of Oude. All that I know for certain is, that he is a great patriot, and that if you are obliged to get patriots from India, it is high time that I were home.

I am now preparing to quit this country; I have written for a passage, and mean to go to Madras next month; and if nothing unexpectedly occurs to detain me, I shall sail in October, and reach England, I hope, in March. I shall leave India with great regret, for I shall carry with me only a moderate competency, while by remaining four or five

years longer I should double my fortune; this, however, is of little consequence, as I am not expensive. But what I am chiefly anxious about is, what I am to do when I go home. I have no rank in the army there, and could not be employed upon an expedition to the Continent, or any other quarter; and as I am a stranger to the generous natives of your isle, I should be excluded from every other line as well as military, and should have nothing to do but to lie down in a field like the farmer's boy, and look at the lark sailing through the clouds. I wish to see our father and mother, and shall therefore make the voyage; but I much fear that I shall soon get tired of an idle life, and be obliged to return to this country for employment.

LETTER 25

To Mr Cumming

Madras, 1st September, 1815.

We have made no progress here since I wrote to you in June last. The resolutions of Government of the 1st of March, and my letters, will have informed you how little has been done; that no one thing has been finally done; that different points of the judicial despatch have been referred to the Sudder Adawalat, the Board of Revenue, and the Commission; that they are respectively to call upon the local officers for their opinions on certain points, and that they are then to frame the regulations.

These regulations, when framed, will be some months with the Sudder Adawlut, who will report

upon them to Government, and Government will then send them to Bengal for the sanction of the Supreme Government. Some months will elapse before their sanction is granted; they must then be translated, which will consume some months more; and by the time they can be circulated to all the districts, the Commission will have expired. The six regulations drawn up by the Commission have been with the Sudder Adawlut about two months, and it is quite uncertain how much longer they may remain with them. Only one will be circulated, without reference to Bengal; it is that which transfers the police, but not the office of magistrate, to the collector, and will not do any good. The council will oppose the promulgation of the rest, without the authority of the Supreme Government. They will therefore be sent to Bengal; and as Lord Moira proposes that the two governments should deliberate maturely on the whole subject of the judicial dispatch, and "avail themselves of the advantages of a mutual interchange of sentiments and suggestions, in the course of the deliberations respecting so serious an object," it may be some years before they are issued. Why should we amuse ourselves with interchanges of sentiments on things which have undergone a ten years' discussion, and which the Government at home has directed to be adopted? or of what use can it be to import sentiments from Bengal, on panchayats and potails, which most of the public servants under that presidency profess never to have heard of? I see no way of enabling the Commission to answer any of the objects of its institution, but by sending

out orders without delay to the Government here to carry into immediate execution, without reference to, or waiting for, an answer from Bengal to any reference that may have been made, all these modifications on which the Government at home have already made up their mind.

The proposed changes have many opponents; because there are only a few collectors who understand the nature of them, from not having seen potails and panchayets employed, before the introduction of the judicial code; they are opposed by many in the judicial line, who consider the present system, whatever it may be, as the best. They are opposed by some, from a sincere conviction that native agency is dangerous; and by some, because they have had no share in suggesting them but the best-founded motive of opposition is one which has only lately appeared, namely, the probability that the natives will give so much preference to the settlement of causes by heads of villages and punchayets, as to leave so little business to the zillah courts, that many of them will be reduced. I do not believe that this would happen soon, because it will be a considerable time before the plan can be completely communicated to the natives; and the neglect or silent opposition it is likely to encounter will subside. But I am certain the result will follow, whenever it meets with proper support. In the outset, we shall have complaints from the judges of the ignorance of the potails and punchayets, their partiality and corruption. This will often be true; but the evil will be greatly overbalanced by the good. I only wish to see the plan introduced in any

state, however imperfect; its defects can be gradually corrected: and I am convinced that, under every disadvantage, it will work its own way.

LETTER 26

To The Marquis of Hastings, Governor-General of India

Darwar, 12*th August*, 1817.

With regard to what more immediately concerns myself, though I cannot but regret deeply to feel for the first time, the army in advance shut against me, and that your Lordship's plans do not admit of my being employed with the forces in the Deccan, I am sensible that those plans ought not to give way to the views of individuals.

I have accepted the command offered to me by the Madras Government, of the troops destined for the occupation of the Peishwa's cessions in Darwar and Savanore. Had I been certain that it would have led to nothing else, I would have declined it; but I indulge the hope that, in the event of hostilities, and of any vacancy occurring among the brigadiers in the Deccan, it may possibly lead to my being employed in that quarter. When I consider, however, the weakness of the Native states, and the character of the chiefs under whose sway they now are, I see little chance of war, and none of a protracted resistance. They have not force to turn our armies, and lengthen out the contest by a predatory invasion of our territories. Their great distance

from our frontier, and the magnitude of our disposable force, are almost insurmountable obstacles to the success of such an enterprise; whilst nothing but our following them, too regularly, could save them from being almost entirely destroyed. They may run ahead for a few days, but, if followed perseveringly by numerous small detachments properly supported, they will have no time to rest or plunder; they will be exhausted and overtaken. I have seen Sir John Malcolm's able observations on this subject; and I should, if anything, rather rate their military power lower than he does. It is not that they want resources, or that they have not men and horses, but that there is no one amongst them possessed of those superior talents which are necessary to direct them to advantage.

There is so little system or subordination in Native governments, that much more energy is required under them than under the more regular governments of Europe, to give full effect to their resources. Scindiah was never formidable, even in the height of his power. The great means which he possessed were lost in his feeble hands. The exertions of Holkar against Lord Lake were still weaker than those of Scindiah. The power of Scindiah's as well as of Holkar's government, has so much declined since that period, that it is scarcely credible that either Scindiah or Meer Khan would venture to oppose by force any measure for the suppression of the Pindarries. But it is still possible that they might act otherwise; for there is sometimes a kind of infatuation about Indian chiefs who have lost a part of their dominions, which tempts

them to risk the rest in a contest which they know to be hopeless.

The situation of the British Government with regard to the Native powers is entirely changed within the last twenty years. It formerly brought very small armies into the field, with hardly any cavalry; and the issue of any war in which it engaged was extremely uncertain. It now brings armies into the field superior to those of the enemy, not only in infantry, but also in cavalry, both in quality and in number. The superiority is so great, that the event of any struggle in which it may be engaged is no longer doubtful. It has only to bring forward its armies, and dictate what terms it pleases, either without war, or after a short and fruitless resistance. It may, however, be doubted whether, after the settlement of the Pindarries, it ought to avail itself of its predominant power, in order to extend the system of subsidiary alliances, by stationing a force in Bhopaul or in any other foreign territory. While the military power of Mysore and of the Mahratta chiefs was yet in its vigour, subsidiary alliances were in some degree necessary for its safety, but that time is now past; and when, therefore, the evils which a subsidiary force entails upon every country in which it is established are considered, it appears advisable that future security against the Pindarries should be sought by their reduction, and by compelling Scindiah, for his conduct in supporting them, to cede the districts restored to him in 1805—6, rather than by stationing a subsidiary force in Bhopaul. There are many weighty objections to the employment of a subsidiary force.

It has a natural tendency to render the government of every country in which it exists, weak and oppressive; to extinguish all honourable spirit among the higher classes of society, and to degrade and impoverish the whole people. The usual remedy of a bad government in India is a quiet revolution in the palace, or a violent one by rebellion, or foreign conquest. But the presence of a British force cuts off every chance of remedy, by supporting the prince on the throne against every foreign and domestic enemy. It renders him indolent, by teaching him to trust to strangers for his security; and cruel and avaricious, by showing him that he has nothing to fear from the hatred of his subjects. Wherever the subsidiary system is introduced, unless the reigning prince be a man of great abilities, the country will soon bear the marks of it in decaying villages and decreasing population. This has long been observed in the dominions of the Peishwa and the Nizam, and is now beginning to be seen in Mysore. The talents of Purneah, while he acted as Dewan, saved that country from the usual effects of the system; but the Rajah is likely to let them have their full operation. He is indolent and prodigal, and has already, besides the current revenue, dissipated about sixty lacs of pagodas of the treasures laid up by the late Dewan. He is mean, artful, revengeful, and cruel. He does not take away life, but he inflicts the most disgraceful and inhuman punishments on men of every rank, at a distance from his capital, where he thinks it will remain unknown to Europeans; and though young, he is already detested by his subjects.

A subsidiary force would be a most useful establishment, if it could be directed solely to the support of our ascendancy, without nourishing all the vices of a bad government; but this seems to be almost impossible. The only way in which this object has ever, in any degree, been attained, is by the appointment of a Dewan. This measure is, no doubt, liable to numerous objections; but still it is the only one by which any amends can be made to the people of the country for the miseries brought upon them by the subsidiary force, in giving stability to a vicious government. The great difficulty is to prevent the prince from counteracting the Dewan, and the resident from meddling too much; but, when this is avoided, the Dewan may be made a most useful instrument of government.

There is, however, another view under which the subsidiary system should be considered,—I mean that of its inevitable tendency to bring every Native state into which it is introduced, sooner or later, under the exclusive dominion of the British Government. It has already done this completely in the case of the Nabob of the Carnatic. The observation of Moro Dekshat, in speaking of the late treaty to Major Ford, 'that no Native power could, from its habits, conduct itself with such strict fidelity as we seemed to demand,' is perfectly just. This very Peishwah will probably again commit a breach of the alliance. The Nizam will do the same; and the same consequences, a farther reduction of their power for our own safety, must again follow. Even if the prince himself were disposed to adhere rigidly to the alliance, there will always be some amongst

his principal officers who will urge him to break it. As long as there remains in the country any high-minded independence, which seeks to throw off the control of strangers, such counsellors will be found. I have a better opinion of the natives of India than to think that this spirit will ever be completely extinguished; and I can therefore have no doubt that the subsidiary system must everywhere run its full course, and destroy every government which it undertakes to protect.

In this progress of things, the evil of a weak and oppressive government, supported by a subsidiary alliance, will at least be removed. But even if all India could be brought under the British dominion, it is very questionable whether such a change, either as it regards the natives or ourselves, ought to be desired. One effect of such a conquest would be, that the Indian army, having no longer any war-like neighbours to combat, would gradually lose its military habits and discipline, and that the Native troops would have leisure to feel their own strength, and for want of other employment, to turn it against their European masters. But even if we could be secured against every internal convulsion, and could retain the country quietly in subjection, I doubt much if the condition of the people would be better than under their Native princes. The strength of the British government enables it to put down every rebellion, to repel every foreign invasion, and to give to its subjects a degree of protection which those of no Native power enjoy. Its laws and institutions also afford them a security from domestic oppression, unknown in those states; but these

advantages are dearly bought. They are purchased by the sacrifice of independence, of national character, and of whatever renders a people respectable. The Natives of the British provinces may, without fear, pursue their different occupations, as traders, meerassidars, or husbandmen, and enjoy the fruits of their labour in tranquillity; but none of them can aspire to any thing beyond this mere animal state of thriving in peace—none of them can look forward to any share in the legislation or civil or military government of their country. It is from men who either hold, or are eligible for public office, that Natives take their character: where no such men exist, there can be no energy in any other class of the community. The effect of this state of things is observable in all the British provinces, whose inhabitants are certainly the most abject race in India. No elevation of character can be expected among men who, in the military line, cannot attain to any rank above that of subahdar, where they are as much below an ensign as an ensign is below the commander-in-chief, and who, in the civil line, can hope for nothing beyond some petty judicial or revenue office, in which they may, by corrupt means, make up for their slender salary.

The consequence, therefore, of the conquest of India by the British arms would be, in place of raising, to debase the whole people. There is perhaps no example of any conquest in which the Natives have been so completely excluded from all share of the government of their country as in British India.

Among all the disorders of the Native States, the field is open for every man to raise himself; and hence among them there is a spirit of emulation, of restless enterprise and independence, far preferable to the servility of our Indian subjects. The existence of independent Native States is also useful in drawing off the turbulent and disaffected among our Native troops. Many of these men belonging to the Madras army formerly sought service in Mysore.

If the British Government is not favourable to the improvement of the Indian character, that of its control through a subsidiary force is still less so.

Its power is now so great, that it has nothing to fear from any combination; and it is perfectly able to take satisfaction for any insult, without any extension of the subsidiary system, being necessary. It will generally be found much more convenient to carry on war where it has not been introduced. This was the case in both the wars with Tippoo Sultan. The conquest was complete, because our operations were not perplexed by any subsidiary alliance with him. The simple and direct mode of conquest from without, is more creditable both to our armies and to our national character than that of dismemberment from within by the aid of a subsidiary force. However just the motives may be from which such a force acts, yet the situation in which it is placed renders its acting at all too like the movements of the Praetorian bands. It acts, it is true, only by the orders of its own Government, and only for public objects; but still it is always ready in the

neighbourhood of the capital, to dictate terms to, or to depose the prince whom it was stationed there to attend.

I cannot conclude this letter without apologising both for its length and for the freedom with which I have expressed myself. But it appears to me that our Indian Empire has now reached that point whence it becomes a subject for the most serious consideration, whether it ought in future to be extended by means of subsidiary alliances.

LETTER 27

To Mrs Munro

Dummul, 19th November, 1817.

I left camp yesterday morning, and the sudden transition from constant noise and bustle to silence and solitude appears almost like a dream. This is the only time since my last return to India that I have travelled alone by regular stages, except during my journey from Hurrihur to Darwar. I was glad that you were not in camp, because it would have been both fatiguing and uncomfortable to me as well as to yourself, and would have been a very inconvenient interruption to the free and constant access which every body in a camp should have to the commanding officer; but now that I am alone, I am sorry that you are away. It is only when I am alone, however, that I wish for you. I should not like to have you at Darwar, because I might be called away suddenly, and be obliged to leave you

alone among strangers, and the distance from Madras would be too great for you to undertake the journey alone. I wished much to have had you with me this morning in my walk. The weather is so cool, that I went out after breakfast, between ten and eleven, and strolled along the bank of a rocky nullah for an hour; often standing still for some minutes, looking at the water tumbling over the stones, and the green sod and bushes looking greener from a bright sun. There is nothing I enjoy so much as the sight and the sound of water gushing and murmuring among rocks and stones. I fancy I could look on the stream for ever—it never tires me. I never see a brawling rivulet in any part of the world, without thinking of the one I first saw in my earliest years, and wishing myself beside it again. There seems to be a kind of sympathy among them all. They have all the same sound, and in India and Scotland they resemble each other more than any other part of the landscape. I had written thus far about one o'clock to-day, when I was interrupted by the killedar of this place wanting a pass to visit a pagoda in the Company's territory, with twenty horsemen; then came complaints from the head man of the village about camp-followers; then my own Bramin and Mahratta letters, which, with half an hour for dinner, occupied me till dark. As the same thing will happen tomorrow, and tomorrow, I am now finishing this letter by candlelight, with the help of a handkerchief tied over the shade. This, I believe, is the first time since we were at Shevagunga that

I have had such an apparatus. When I was encamped about three weeks ago on the spot where I am now, everything looked dismal; it had been raining constantly for many weeks, the ground was swampy, the tents were wet outside and inside, and man and beast were jaded. The ground is now dry and covered with grass, as if not a foot had trodden upon it; the change is so great, that it seems to me like a transition from war to peace, and as if a long time had passed since I was here. I shall feel the same thing at every halting-place on my way to Darwar, and I shall be harassed with complaints from every village about my own devastations among the grain fields, when I was marching down this way.

I have contrived to read the whole four volumes you sent me of the 'Tales of my Landlord.' The 'Black Dwarf' is an absurd thing, with little interest, and some very disgusting characters. I like 'Old Mortality' much, but not so well as 'Guy Mannering.' Cuddie has got a little of Sambo about him. His testifying mother is just such an auld wife as I have often seen in the West. Colonel Graham is drawn with great spirit; and I feel the more interested in him from knowing that he is the celebrated Lord Dundee. I admire Edith, but I should like her better if she were not so wonderfully wise—she talks too much like an Edinburgh Reviewer. Kind remembrance to Cochrane and his lady.

LETTER 28

To Lord Hastings, Governor-General

Madras, 12th November, 1818.

My temporary detention here, in consequence of the Castlereagh's having been driven out of the roads by the hurricane of the 24th ultimo, has permitted me, before leaving this country, to have the honour of receiving and answering your Lordship's letter of the 22nd September.

I believe that there is no stronger incentive to the zealous discharge of public duty than the hope of gaining the approbation of those whose characters we have been accustomed to respect, because they are respected by the public: it cannot therefore but be a source of the highest gratification to me to find that my endeavours to execute properly the share of the late campaign assigned to me have been deemed worthy of a private testimonial, as well as official record, by your Lordship. Had I not been conscious that I ought, on account of my health, to leave India for a time, I would not have so soon have given up my situation in the Mahratta country, as I thereby sacrificed every future prospect of again earning praise when I most valued it.

On my return to Madras, Mr. Elliot expressed his desire that I should remain in India till January, in order to finish what he thought was still incomplete in the business of the late Commission; and he mentioned at the same time that it was his intention

to re-establish the Commission until my departure. I was sorry the proposal was made, because my not assenting to it might be construed into disrespect; but I declined it on the ground that, having relinquished a military command merely on account of the state of my eyes, it was impossible that I could accept of a civil situation which, from the very nature of its duties, must prove much more injurious to them. Had they not suffered so much from long residence in this country, as to render an entire relief from business necessary for a time, I should, with pleasure, have resumed the pursuits of the labours of the Commission; for I was anxious to give what assistance I could in carrying into effect the orders of the Court of Directors, for employing the natives more extensively in the internal administration of the country. Their exclusion from offices of trust and emolument has become a part of our system of government, and has been productive of no good. Whenever, from this cause, the public business falls into arrear, it is said to be owing to the want of a sufficient number of Europeans; and more European agency is recommended as a cure for every evil. Such agency is too expensive; and, even if it was not, it ought rather to be abridged than enlarged, because it is, in many cases, much less efficient than that of the natives. For the discharge of all subordinate duties, but especially in the judicial line, the natives are infinitely better qualified than Europeans. I have never seen any European whom I thought competent, from his knowledge of the

language and the people, to ascertain the value of the evidence given before him. The proceedings in our courts of judicature, which in our reports make a grave and respectable appearance, are, I know, frequently the subject of derision among the natives.

But it is said that the natives are too corrupt to be trusted. This is an old objection, and one which is generally applicable in similar circumstances, to the natives of every country. Nobody has ever supposed that the subordinate officers of the Excise and Customs in England are remarkable for their purity. But we need not go home for examples. The Company's servants were notoriously known to make their fortunes in partnership with their native agents, until Lord Cornwallis thought it advisable to purchase their integrity by raising their allowances. Let this be done with regard to the natives, and the effect will be similar, though not perhaps in a similar degree; for we cannot expect to find in a nation fallen under a foreign dominion the same pride and high principles as among a free people; but I am persuaded that we shall meet with a greater share of integrity and talent than we are aware of. While we persist in withholding liberal salaries from the natives, we shall have the services of the worst part of them: by making the salaries adequate to the trust, we shall secure the services of the best. Natives should be employed in every situation where they are better calculated than the Europeans to discharge the duty required. In all original suits they are much fitter to investigate the merits than Europeans. The European

judges should be confined almost entirely to the business of appeals. In criminal cases the fact should be found by a native jury, who are much more competent than either the European judge or his officers to weigh the nature of the evidence.

Our Government will always be respected from the influence of our military power; but it will be never popular while it offers no employment to the natives that can stimulate the ambition of the better class of them. Foreign conquerors have treated the natives with violence, and often with great cruelty, but none has treated them with so much scorn as we; none have stigmatized the whole people as unworthy of trust, as incapable of honesty, and as fit to be employed only where we cannot do without them. It seems to be not only ungenerous, but impolitic, to debase the character of a people fallen under our dominion; and nothing can more certainly produce this effect than our avowing our want of confidence in them, and, on that account, excluding them as much as possible from every office of importance.

It is with great reluctance that I have declined acting again in a Commission the main object of which was to give to the natives a greater share in the internal administration of the country; and the remarks which I have ventured to make have been drawn from me chiefly by my anxiety to satisfy your Lordship that my refusal to engage in a civil occupation has proceeded altogether from the same cause which compelled me to resign my military command.

reach for the sake of which men are urged to exertion in other countries. This work of improvement, in whatever way it may be attempted, must be very slow, but it will be in proportion to the degree of confidence which we repose in them, and to the share which we give them, in the administration of public affairs. All that we can give them without endangering our own ascendancy, should be given. All real military power must be kept in our own hands; but they might, with advantage hereafter, be made eligible to every civil office under that of a member of the Government. The change should be gradual, because they are not yet fit to discharge properly the duties of a high civil employment, according to our rules and ideas; but the sphere of their employment should be extended in proportion as we find that they become capable of filling properly higher situations.

We shall never have much accurate knowledge of the resources of the country, or of the causes by which they are raised or depressed; we shall always assess it very unequally, and often too high, until we learn to treat the higher classes of natives as gentlemen, and to make them assist us accordingly in doing what is done by the House of Commons in England, in estimating and apportioning the amount of taxation.

I am, with great regard and esteem,

MUNRO

LETTER 30

To Sir Graham Moore, K.C.B.

Madras, 5th November, 1821.

I am glad that you sacrificed your seat at the Admiralty for the command in the Mediterranean, though I shall, perhaps, on returning home some years hence, and not finding my old friend in that comfortable corner-house of the Admiralty, which I liked so much to visit, lament the romantic notions which tempted him in an evil hour to leave it. I must console myself for the loss by going out now and then to Brook Farm, and getting an account from yourself of your voyages and travels in the most delightful regions, and once the abode of the most interesting people of the earth. No wish has ever with me been so strong and constant from my earliest years as that of visiting Italy and Greece; and were I twenty years younger, I should certainly spend seven of them there. But this last boyish expedition to India has, I fear, been fatal to all my rational plans of travelling in Europe; for by the time I get home I shall, I fear, be too old or too doited to feel the recollections which ought to be excited by the sight of the Capitol or the Piraeus. I wished myself along with you when you describe the portraits of De'L'Isle, Adom, and Valette, in the hall of the Grand Masters at Malta. I feel more interest in Malta than Gibraltar; and I would rather see Rhodes than either, because it is more connected with the ancient Grecians, whom I admire above all nations, not even excepting the Romans. These

nations had not the benefit of the art of printing, and from the effects which it has of late years produced in our own country, I am not sure that they were not as well without it. Perfect liberty of the press would be an excellent thing if we could have it without its licentiousness, but this is impossible; and I therefore suspect that it will one day become necessary to increase the restrictions upon it; for it is an instrument by means of which it is much easier among the lower orders of the people to do evil than good. A writer like Tom Paine can produce mischief almost immediately, which it may require years to remedy. I could hardly have believed that the press could have done what it did in the case of the Queen, or that such a clamour could ever have been raised about such a woman. It appears, however, to have now subsided, and I trust that the nation will feel the comfort of having in some degree recovered its senses, and endeavour to retain them. I send this letter by Sir John Malcolm, who goes home by Egypt, by which means it will reach you much sooner than by the usual channel. I am not sure whether or not you are acquainted with Sir John. His character stands very high in this country—so high that he has left none behind who can at all be compared with him. I regret his loss, both as a public servant and as an old and esteemed friend. Lady M. met with a very unfortunate accident in February last, by falling from a horse on her head; the concussion was so great that she was for some days insensible, and one of her eyes has not yet recovered its proper place. She joins me in kindest wishes to you and

Lady Moore. Tell Lady M. that her brother is well at Darwar.

LETTER 31

To The Right Hon. G. Canning

Madras, 1st *May*, 1823.

I would have written to you sooner, had I not been prevented by the expectation of seeing you in India. That hope is now at an end; and as I can have no claim to intrude upon your time in your new duties, I write merely for the purpose of taking leave of you as Chief Director of Indian affairs. Your not coming to India has been a great disappointment to me; but I do not regret it. I rather, for the sake of the country, rejoice that you have remained at home. Every man who feels for its honour must be proud to see that there are public men who prefer fame founded on the exertion of great and useful talents, to wealth and splendour.

Though no longer Indian Minister, you can still be of great service to India, by supporting measures calculated for its advantage, and by giving India the same freedom of trade as England. Our power in this country is now very great, and, I think, is in no danger of being shaken, if the local governments are enabled to keep the press and the missionaries within proper bounds, and if the legislature will, by limiting with more distinctness and

precision the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court, effectually prevent it from extending its cognisance, by fictions of law, to matters with which it ought to have no concern.

By not coming to India, you have escaped the irksome task of toiling daily through heaps of heavy, long-drawn papers. I never had a very high opinion of our records; but it was not until my last return that I knew that they contained such a mass of useless trash. Every man writes as much as he can, and quotes Montesquieu, and Hume, and Adam Smith, and speaks as if we were living in a country where people were free and governed themselves. Most of their papers might have been written by men who were never out of England, and their projects are nearly as applicable to that country as to India.

The Bombay Government have had the benefit of the experience of Bengal and Madras, and their arrangements will, in consequence, be better adapted to the state of this country than those of either of these Presidencies. Their settlements will, in general, be Rayetwar, which is no new system, but an old one of the Deccan, and of most other countries, and of England itself. In a rayetwar settlement of England, every landowner, whether his rent were 5 l. or 50,000 l. a-year, would be called a rayet, and the agreement would be made with him. But in a Zemindary settlement of England, we should consider the Lord-Lieutenants of counties and other public officers as Zemindars and landlords, and

make our agreement with them, and leave them to settle with the actual proprietors, whom we should regard as mere tenants. These are matters in which I have long taken a deep interest, but for the last twelve months I have felt a much deeper one in the affairs of Greece. Europe is more indebted to that country than has ever yet been acknowledged. I have seen no book which gives to Greece all that is due to her. Even the constitution of our own country would, without her, probably not have been what it is, notwithstanding the boasted wisdom of our ancestors. We have always, I think, been more solicitous about the preservation of the Ottoman Empire than necessary. If the Turks were driven out of Europe, there would be no cause to apprehend any danger from their territories being occupied by other powers, unless Constantinople fell into the hands of the Russians. England could lose nothing by other states becoming stronger and richer. It is for the advantage of a great and enlightened nation to have powerful rivals. By the emancipation of the Greeks we should, in one year, make more Christians than all our Eastern missionaries will convert in a hundred. If the Greeks, without foreign aid, could emancipate themselves, it would be better that they should do so, as the toils and exploits by which they accomplished it would give them a national character and a spirit to defend their liberty.

I cannot conclude without thanking you for all your kindness to me while you held the office of Indian Minister.

LETTER 32

To Lady Munro

Nagangeri, 30th May, 1821.

This is the last day in which I am likely for some months to be in a cool climate; and if I do not write to you now, I do not know when I shall. We had a great deal of rain the night we left Bangalore, and we have had showers every day since. Our journey has so far been very pleasant; but it will be very different tomorrow, when we descend into the burning plains of the Carnatic. We are now encamped about two hundred yards above the spot where our tents were when we last passed this way, and very near the large banian-tree to which we first walked. It is a beautiful wild scene of mingled rocks and jungle, and aged trees and water. I wish we had something like it at home. It is pleasant to see the different groups of travellers with their cattle coming in one after another; some sitting and some sleeping under the shady trees and bushes so thickly scattered around. There is something delightful in viewing the repose and stillness which every one seems to enjoy. To me it has always the effect of something that is plaintive, by recalling times and beings which have long since passed away. I wish I could indulge in these dreams, and wander about in this romantic country, instead of returning to the dull and endless task of public business in which I have already been so long engaged. When we last landed in Egland, I never expected to have been again toiling under an Indian

sun, or that I should ever have been obliged again to leave you among strangers. I thought that we might have often travelled together, or that if we sometimes parted from my being a greater wanderer than yourself, you would at least have remained among your friends and relatoins. But as these expectations cannot now be realized for sometime, we must endeavour to make ourselves as contented as we can, while we continue in this country.

LETTER 33

To His Sister

Trippitore, 13th October, 1821.

I do not write to you to answer letters, but rather to renew the memory of old times, when you and I were regular correspondents, and when I seldom made a journey without your hearing of it. I set out for Bangalore about a month ago, where Lady Munro had been ever since for the recovery of her health; and I am now on my way to Madras with her, where I shall arrive about the 25th of this month. The distance from Bangalore to Madras by the direct route is two hundred and eight miles; but I have come round by the Baramahl, which is about fifty miles farther, both for the purpose of seeing the inhabitants, and making some inquiries into the state of the country, and of revisiting scenes where, above thirty years ago, I spent seven very happy years. They were the first of my public life, and I almost wish it had ended there; for it has ever since, with the exception of the time I

was at home, been a series of unceasing hard labour. The place where I now am, is one where Colonel Read lived between 1792 and 1799, where I often came to see him, with many old friends who are now dead or absent. I thought I had taken leave of it for ever when I went with the army to Seringapatam; but I have since twice returned to it—once in 1815, and now; and I shall probably yet return to it again before I leave India. We get attached to all those places where we have at any former period lived pleasantly among our friends, and the attachment grows with the increasing distance of time; but, independently of this cause, the natural beauty of this place is enough to make any one partial to it. There is nothing to be compared to it in England, nor, what you will think higher praise, in Scotland. It stands in the midst of an extensive fertile valley, from ten to forty miles wide, and sixty or seventy long, surrounded by an amphitheatre of mountains of every shape, many of them nearly twice as high as the Grampians. The country here among the hills has none of the cold and stinted appearance which such countries have at home. The largest trees, the richest soil, and the most luxuriant vegetation, are usually found among naked masses of granite at the bottom of the hills. We are travelling with tents; our stages are usually from twelve to sixteen miles. You will think this but a short distance, but we find it long enough. It generally takes three or four hours, and the last half of the journey is usually in a burning sun: when this is to be repeated every day for some weeks, it becomes very fatiguing. In cloudy or cool

weather it is delightful, and far preferable to any travelling at home; but at present, just before the change of the monsoon, the weather is clear and sultry. When therefore we reach our tents, though we get out of the burning sun, we merely escape from a greater degree of heat to a lesser; for we have no refreshing coolness, as you will readily perceive when I tell you the thermometer in my tent is generally ninety-two the greater part of the day.

LETTER 34

To Lady Munro

Rajahmundry, 6th September, 1822.

We have been here since the 4th, without any prospect of getting away, as the Godaveri is not only full, but has overflowed its banks, and made the road impassable for several miles on the opposite side. We might cross to the other side, and be put down in a village half under water, but we could not get away from it, and prefer remaining here in bungalows. An experiment is now making by sending over some tents, to ascertain whether, by placing them on coolies and rafts, and letting the camels and elephants travel without loads, they may not reach a rising ground about five miles beyond the river. If they succeed, we shall follow; but we cannot receive an answer until tomorrow evening, as the boat takes more than a whole day to make a single trip. Even if our advance is successful, it will require five or six days to carry us all over. I have just been interrupted by Captain Watson,

who tells me that, by information just received, there is too much water to make any attempt, so we must just remain quiet for a few days.

The bungalow which I now occupy stands on the top of an old bastion, close to the edge of the river. The scene is magnificent. We see the Godavari coming along from the Polaveram hills about twenty miles distant, and passing under our walls in a deep and rapid stream, two miles broad. The mass of water is probably greater than that which flows in all the rivers in Britain together. Most of the party, as well as myself, spend two or three hours every day in looking at it. I never get tired of it; but I wish it were a little nearer to Madras, for it is one of those fine sights which will very much derange all my calculations of seeing you.

I inclose Mrs Erskine's letter, because it mentions our boy.

LETTER 35

To The Duke of Wellington

Madras, 18th September, 1824.

My dear Duke,

The few young men who have brought me letters from your Grace, have, I fear, derived little benefit from my acquaintance. I have, however, done what I believe you would have done yourself. I have requested the officers under whom they were placed to look after them, and make them learn their duty. In September last, I sent an application to the Court of Directors to be relieved. I had been quite long

enough in India; and as every thing was quiet and settling into good order, I thought it a proper time for my leaving it. Had I then suspected that within a few months we were to have both war and famine, I should of course never have thought of resigning until our difficulties were at an end. But I regret that it is now too late. I was probably more surprised at hearing of the intended war than people at home will be; for I never had the least suspicion that we were to go to war with the King of Ava, till a letter reached this Presidency, in February last, asking us what number of troops we could furnish for foreign service. I thought that the local officers of Chittagong and Arracan might have carried on their petty aggressions on both frontiers for another year, and that they probably have got tired and settled matters among themselves. Such fellows do not read Grotius or Vattel; and we must not expect them to be guided entirely by their piety. Now that we are actually at war, it is some satisfaction to have those great names on our side. Our case is a clear one of self-defence and violated territory; and I have little doubt but that fortune will on this occasion take the right side. Our force, under Sir A. Campbell, got to Rangoon in May, with the intention of embarking when the river should rise next month, and proceeding by water, before the S. W. monsoon, to Amrapoor, a distance of five hundred miles. This plan failed for a want of boats; but even if there had been boats, it would have been impracticable. I think that this force can advance only by land, when the river falls, and the country is dry, in November. It has, to be sure,

no draught or carriage cattle; but we can send enough for a few light field-pieces, and it ought to be able to pick up more in the country. Its heavy baggage and stores must go in boats, which, with proper exertion, may be prepared in sufficient number. I am more afraid of sickness than of any thing else: the rains have been constant, and unusually severe since the end of May. Fever is very general, but not often fatal; but many Europeans have been carried off by dysentery, and we are not sure that, by continuing two or three months longer in the same confined spot, the sickness may not increase so much as materially to cripple the army. The Europeans have no fresh meat: they are fed on salt beef and salt fish. There are plenty of cattle in the country, and there were numbers at Rangoon when the troops landed; but they were not permitted to be seized, lest it should offend the prejudices of the natives. This is carrying the matter farther than we do in India. We must not allow our feelings for the cows to starve ourselves.

The Bengal Government do not seem to have yet determined on their plan of operations. They intended at one time to have entered Ava with their main force from Arracan, and with a small one from Cachar. They have learned that Arracan is too unhealthy, and talk of making their principal attack by Cachar and Munnipoor. They seem to think that Sir A. Campbell cannot advance towards the capital, as he has no bullocks nor elephants, and that it is quite impossible to supply him with them. We could not equip his force like an Indian army, but there would be no impossibility in send-

ing him three or four thousand bullocks. The expense would be great—five or six lacs of rupees; but this is little to the whole expense of a campaign, and nothing when we consider that the success of the campaign may turn on their being sent or not.

The military character of the enemy is far below that of any of the Indian native powers, and they are miserably armed: no matchlocks, a very few bad muskets, and their pikes and swords do not deserve the name. They are not nearly so well armed as the common villagers of the Deccan, who turn out to fight with each other about a village boundary. The war began on the eastern frontier of Bengal, by employing detachments of sepoys to attack stockades in the jungle, in which they met with frequent checks, and were harassed and dispirited. The defeat of six or eight of these companies, encamped under cover of the bank of a tank, by the Burmans, after three days' regular approaches, gave the enemy at once a high military character, and his numbers were estimated at fifteen thousand men: it is probable that they never exceed four or five thousand. This body, after its victory, stockaded itself at Ramoo, in the Chittagong district, where it remained about two months; but retired lately, on finding that troops were collecting at Chittagong. The enemy's numbers and resources have been greatly exaggerated. He has no means of offering any serious opposition; and I should be very sorry to see peace made until we have marched through every part of his country, and occupied the capital. We have sent from Madras to Rangoon three regiments of Europeans

and nine battalions of Native infantry, and another battalion is on its passage. In addition to this force, Sir Archibald Campbell has two European regiments, and a marine battalion which he brought from Bengal. I cannot understand why this force should not be able to penetrate through a fertile country, when it is well supplied with salt provisions and grain. As the villages and population all lie near the Irawaddy, such a country cannot be driven, except very partially. Their cattle and grain could not be removed out of the reach of light detachments of two or three corps, making a sweep of thirty or fifty miles. I do not like to hear people talking of difficulties when an army can be fed, and when the enemy is too weak to oppose it. I think that, in such circumstances, it can never be impracticable to march through his country. It is, however, useless for me to talk any longer on a point on which all that I can say must be mere conjecture, as I have never been in Ava.

I say nothing to you of anybody here, for I believe there is not one man in this country of whom you know anything.

LETTER 36

To Lord Amherst

Madras, 25th February, 1824.

The official letters from the Supreme Government, regarding the number of troops that could be furnished by this Presidency for the proposed expedition, were received on the 23rd, and answered on

the same day. In our answer, the number of troops is stated that can be ready for 'embarkation.' There can be no difficulty about the troops, or even a greater number, if necessary; but there will be serious, and, I apprehend, insurmountable difficulty about the shipping required to transport them. The Bengal letter says nothing about shipping; and it is therefore doubtful whether it is intended that we should provide it. But the general tenor of the letter, and the expression 'to be despatched,' led us to suppose that we are to find the shipping, because it is evident that, unless it be ready, and the stores on board early in April, the troops cannot be dispatched at the time. We shall therefore take measures for procuring tonnage; but as we have none of our own, and can only get it by hiring such vessels as may touch here, it is very doubtful that we shall be able, within the short time prescribed, to secure one-half of the number requisite for the transport of four to five thousand men; and we shall thus incur a very heavy expense without accomplishing the object intended, unless another letter from Bengal, instructing us not to prepare tonnage, should reach us in a few days, before we have gone too far.

But the mere tonnage, even if it were ready, is not sufficient. There ought to be a number of flat-bottomed boats, sufficient to land at once the whole or greater part of the force. In all maritime expeditions, it is essential that we should have the means for embarking or disembarking rapidly—an object for which the common ships' boats are totally unfit. The last expedition that sailed from

Madras had an ample supply of flat-boats, which were built for the purpose. The preparation of such a number as would be necessary for four or five thousand troops would require some months. The distance between Calcutta and Madras making it nearly a month before an answer can be received to a letter, renders all sudden operations, in which the forces of both Presidencies are to co-operate, extremely liable to accidents, because there is no time for consultation or explanation; and under such circumstances, no operations are so liable to failure as maritime expeditions. A service of this kind requires, more than any other, that every equipment should be ample, because there can seldom be any medium between complete success and failure; partial success is little better than an expensive failure.

The Supreme Government have, no doubt, some information which may render a sudden operation against the enemy advisable, provided it can be effected; but the want of tonnage, if tonnage is expected to be found here, will certainly render it impracticable, unless some unlooked for supply should arrive soon. I must own, with the little information which I can be supposed to possess, I should think it better to avoid all inferior expeditions, to wait until we are fully prepared for the main one, and to undertake it with such a force as should have no doubt of success. This would give time for the two Governments to communicate freely, and for the subordinate one to understand exactly what it was to do, and to make its arrangements accordingly; and it would be more

likely, in the end, both to ensure success and to save expense. The occasional hostilities on the eastern frontier of Bengal might, perhaps, still be allowed to continue for some months without much serious inconvenience; and even if the Burmans brought a greater force to that quarter, it might divert their attention from the main object of the attack.

Our troops in the Peninsula lie convenient for all such expeditions, and they are eager to be employed. I am no less anxious that they should go wherever there is service; but I wish, at the same time, that they should go with every means to guard against failure. The drought and scarcity make the march of troops difficult; but this is a difficulty we can get over; but the want of shipping is one for which there is no remedy, unless longer time be allowed for our preparations.

I hope that your Lordship will pardon the freedom with which I have offered these remarks. We shall address the Supreme Government again in two or three days.

LETTER 37

To Lord Amherst

Madras, 7th November, 1824.

I have to-day received yours of the 30th ultimo. The attack on Kittoor has been a melancholy affair; but I do not imagine that the insurrection will extend beyond the district. Chintamene Row, though always discontented, has, I think, too much

at stake to risk a contest with us. You will see, when the official papers reach you, that large reinforcements have been ordered to Darwar, which would have been sufficient for every purpose without calling upon you; but the more force on such occasions the better; it concludes the business sooner, and deters those who are wavering from stirring. There was great imprudence and presumption in the whole of the operation. —should have had no troops. He ought to have gone alone, if he went at all; nobody would have injured him. He should have explained his intentions. If they refused to accede to them, he should have parted from them peaceably, and written to the commanding officer, or to you, that a proper force might have been sent to enforce submission. In all such cases there ought either to be no force at all or an overwhelming one. A good tishildar would have been a much better agent at Kittoor than the collector: he would have caused no commotion; and if he failed, there would have been no loss of character, or exasperation, and a military force might then have been employed with better effect. I never knew an instance in which I should have thought it advisable that the collector should himself be present to direct the employment of force. When he is present his feelings get engaged, and the dispute becomes in some degree personal. When he remains at a distance, and leaves the military force to proceed in its own way, there is no hostility between him and the insurgents, and they give him credit for acting upon principle and by superior authority.

We are engaged in a foreign war, which has already drawn away no less than four European and twelve Native regiments, and we ought, during the continuance at least, to avoid every measure which may be at all likely to excite disturbance at home. We must, however, lose no time in putting down the present insurrection. If it does not spread, which I do not imagine it will, there is nothing formidable in it. There have long been parties in Kittoor, and some of them averse to the zemindars. The widows are probably directed by some of the chiefs. A general amnesty, with very few exceptions, might be offered, and liberal provision for the widows and principal followers, etc. I should never have thought the treasure an object of any consequence, and would much rather have let it go to the widow than have endangered the tranquillity of the country for the sake of it. This little disturbance will not only cause great expense, but embarass almost every military arrangement from Trichinopoly to Nagpoor.

Yours truly,
THOMAS MUNRO

LETTER 38

To His Grace The Duke of Wellington

Madras, 16*th April,* 1826.

I did not think of troubling you with another letter; but as we have at last made peace with the Burmans, I think I may as well give you a few lines,

years have been a more powerful state than Ava. One principal reason in favour of separating Pegue was, the great difficulty and slowness with which all our operations must have proceeded, had the country been hostile, and if the Burman commanders knew how to avail themselves properly of this spirit, and the risk of total failure from our inability to protect our supplies upon our long line of communication. The Bengal Government were however always averse to the separation of Pegue: they thought that the Burmans and Peguers were completely amalgamated into one people; that the Peguers had no wish for independence; that if they had, there was no prince remaining of their dynasty, nor even any chief of commanding influence, to assume the government; that it would retard the attainment of peace; that the project was, in fact, impracticable; and that even if practicable, the execution of it was not desirable, as it would involve us for ever in Indo-Chinese politics, by the necessity of protecting Pegue. Even if we had been obliged to keep troops for an unlimited time in Pegue, it would have saved the necessity of keeping an additional force on the eastern unhealthy frontier of Bengal, as the Burmans would never have disturbed Bengal while we were in Pegue. The Bengal Government were, no doubt, right in being cautious. They acted upon the best, though imperfect, information they possessed.

Those who have the responsibility cannot be expected to be so adventurous as we who have none. But I believe that there is no man who is not now convinced, that the Taliens (Peguers)

deserted the Burman Government, sought independence, and in the hope of obtaining it, though without any pledge on our part, aided in supplying all our wants with a zeal which could not have been surpassed by our subjects.

We sent to Rangoon about three thousand five hundred draught and carriage bullocks; and could have sent five times as many, had there been tonnage.

LETTER 39

To Kirkman Finlay Esq.

Madras, 15th August, 1825.

I do not know that I have ever yet acknowledged the receipt of your letter about Dr Anderson. I have never seen him, but I understand that he is a very good public servant; which, being our townsman, I consider as a matter of course. I hope that you are a friend to free trade for public servants, as well as for other articles; and that you do not think that men ought to have a monopoly of offices because they come from a particular town; or that we should call them China, when we know that they come from Delfthouse. I find, however, that there is no shaking off early prejudice, and becoming quite impartial, as a friend to free trade ought to be; I find that, notwithstanding my long exposure to other climates, I am still Glasgow ware; for, if I had not been so, I should not, when I saw your opinion quoted by Mr Huskisson in support of his measures, have felt as much gratifi-

cation as if I had some share in the matter myself. I remember, when I was in Somerville and Gordons's house, about the time of the appearance of "The Wealth of Nations," that the Glasgow merchants were as proud of the work as if they had written it themselves; and that some of them said it was no wonder that Adam Smith had written such a book, as he had the advantage of their society, in which the same doctrines were circulated with the punch every day. It is surprising to think that we should only just now be beginning to act upon them; the delay is certainly not very creditable to our policy. Our best apology is, perhaps, the American and the French revolutionary wars, during a long course of which the nation was so harassed that there was no time for changing the old system. The nation was just beginning to recover from the American war, when the Revolution in France began; and had that event not taken place, I have no doubt that Mr Pitt would have done what we are now doing. I am not sure that you are not indebted to your old friend the East India Company for the measure not having been longer delayed. The attack upon their monopoly by the delegates in 1812-13 excited discussions, not only upon their privileges, but upon all privileges and restrictions, and the true principles of trade, which probably prepared the mind of men for acceding to the new system sooner than they would otherwise have done. Even now there seems to be too much solicitude about protecting duties: they may, for a limited time, he expedient, where capital cannot be easily withdrawn; but in all other cases why not

abolish them at once ? There is another point on which anxiety is shown, where I think there ought to be none—I mean that of other nations granting similar remissions on our trade. Why should we trouble ourselves about this ? We ought surely not to be restrained from doing ourselves good, by taking their goods as cheap as we can get them, merely because they won't follow our example ? If they will not make our goods cheaper, and take more of them, they will at least take what they did before; so that we suffer no loss on this, while we gain on the other side. I think it is better that we should have no engagements with foreign nations about reciprocal duties, and that it wil be more convenient to leave them to their own discretion in fixing the rate, whether high or low.

India is the country that has been worst used in the new arrangement. All her products ought undoubtedly to be imported freely into England upon paying the same duties, and no more, which English products pay in India. When I see what is done in Parliament against India, I think I am reading about Edward III and the Flemings. I hope we shall talk over all this some day in a ramble in the country, where the cows are still uncivilized enough to cock up their tails and chase strangers.

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NOTES

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1. *Equestrian Statue in the Island*: The remarkable feature of this is the absence of stirrups in it. Many have mentioned the legend that the sculptor, when he discovered the defect, felt so miserable that he committed suicide. The story is however not borne out in the published account of Chantrey's life, unless his "sudden death" in 1841 is euphemism for suicide.

14. *Lady Munro's Picture*: The very large painting of Sir Thomas Munro by Sir Martin Archer Shee was hung up all these years in the Banqueting Hall in Mount Road, while Lady Munro's picture had remained in the Drawing Room. His Excellency Sir Archibald, when he surrendered the Mount Road House to the Ministry, united these two paintings to face each other in a room (the only possible one) of the Guindy Government House:

I've known long time great Munro's tragic fate,—
  The British name his selfless work redeems—
  He endless sought the bride who filled his dreams,
A lovely soul his partner gained, though late,
Who brought him joy: alas, his blissful state
  Soon closed; lone he died where with millions
    teems
  The land he loved: the wife at home in streams
Of grief, must 'wait her death to join her mate.
Their painted forms have marked their fate anew,
  The man in banquet's scene for years had hung,
    Away from her in inner chamber hid,
Till kindly Nye has brought them both to view:
  They stand, the ruler good and wife so young,
    United now, our pity they forbid.

P. R. K.

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28. *cutchery*: revenue office.

— *potails*: headmen of villages.

44. *peshkash*: quit-rent.

46. *taliaris*: village watchmen or servants.

— *panchayats*: "Boards of five", acting as arbitrators or as a local administration.

46. *poligars*: petty chieftains.

94. *pagodas*: gold coins, formerly current in South India, whence the phrase "shaking the pagoda tree".

— *dubash*: one conversant with two languages, an interpreter.

95. *Daniel and Alexander*: brothers of Munro.

97. *Erskine*: Munro's sister, Mrs Erskine.

104. *Baramahl*: "twelve districts" of which Salem was the centre.

107. *Mrs Grant*: Scotch woman, published a volume of poems, adopted literature as profession, and died in 1838.

— *handkerchiefs*: Madras handkerchiefs, bright ones of silk or cotton worn as head-dress by Africans, formerly exported from Madras.

111. *Gardyloo*: warning cry uttered in old Edinburgh before throwing dirty water from the window in the street.

116. *I am still of opinion that war produces many good consequences*: Sir Archibald Nye quotes in a letter to the present writer the following passage from Ruskin's "Crown of Wild Olive," as apposite to Munro's observations: "The common notion that peace and the virtues of civil life flourished together, I found to be wholly untenable. Peace and the vices of civil life only flourish together. We talk of peace and learning, and of peace and plenty, and of peace and civilisation; but I found those were not the words which the Muse of History coupled together, that on her lips, the words were—peace and sensuality—peace and selfishness—peace and death. I found, in brief, that all great nations learned their truth of word, and strength of thought,

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in war; that they were nourished in war, and wasted by peace; taught by war and deceived by peace; in a word, that they were born in war, and expired in peace."

120. *Jackson's millstream*: favourite resort near his boyhood home, of Munro, when the family lived at Northwoodside up the river Kelvin.

123. *cavalier*: high work overlooking surrounding places.

140. *Tishildar*: Tahsildar, Indian revenue officer, subordinate to the collector.

145. *Killedar*: governor of a fort.

146. *garden near Derampoory*: the author of the Salem Gazetteer has pointed out that it has not been possible to identify the spot of this garden.

158. *gamasha*: gumastha, clerk or writer.

159. *pucka*: solid or whole, here full.

— *sear*: an Indian measure.

— *sunnuds*: grants made by authority, documents importing them.

— *curnums*: village accountants.

160. *shaliwahan*: era beginning with 87 A.D.

— *pagoda*: temple.

— *Enaumdars*: holders of land by special grant.

— *rayets*: cultivators of land.

— *monsoon*: season of rains. The south-west monsoon on the west coast lasts from June to September.

161. *Jummabundy*: settlement of revenue, an annual function for collectors.

— *Surat aprons*: common and inferior cotton cloth.

— *masulah boat*: long boat for landing.

162. *brinjaries*: dealers in grain and salt following armies.

— *vakeels*: political or personal representatives to negotiate business.

164. *topes*: groves of trees.

— *wet grain*: paddy.

— *dry grain*: cereals.

— *Sagwulli*: probably a corruption of Telugu "sagubadi" meaning cultivation.

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— *Tuckawi*: loan to ryot to carry on cultivation and recoverable with his quota of revenue.
(only an examination of the original letters must reveal the errors committed in transcribing them.)

165. *cowle*: right or monopoly.

166. *Naigue*: petty officer, corporal.

— *jumma*: land-tax.

167. *sheristadar*: Indian official, assisting collector or judge.

peon: sepoy, Indian soldier.

Ajunla Pass: Ajanta pass, in the north-west of the Nizam's Dominions.

— *Deccan*: south country.

— *Hindostan*: North India.

177. *Lord Clive*: Edward Lord Clive, Governor of Madras, 1794 to 1803.

180. *bandobust*: provide guard for.

— *Huzzorat*: Your honour.

185. *tuppal*: post, letters.

188. *Sudder Adawlet*: court of justice.

194. *Purneah*: Dewan under the Rajah of Mysore, reputed wise administrator.

200. *nullah*: mountain watercourse.

206. *Rt. Hon. G. Canning*: President of the Board of Control in 1816, named Governor-General in 1822, but chose to go back as Secretary. Premier in 1827, died in June of that year.

209. *doited*: crazed with age.

212. *Rayetwari*: system of collecting land-tax directly from the farmer.

218. *Bungalow . . on the top of an old bastion*: long the official residence of the District Judge of Godavari, till it was condemned as unsafe.

225. *Kittoor*: village in Belgaum district, scene of a small rebellion.